Issue Four

MOTIVE

MOTiVE

Issue Four

November 15, 1990

Howdy,

The response to the nominations was SORRY. I suggest that we change the process. There is no reason to have rules of order that no one cares to follow. **Please, please read the Rules and Constitution**, and send me any comments you might have for change. (That is unless you want me to be Papa Doc, OE for Life). There will be no election.

The Copy Count will increase to thirty (**30**) as of next issue. This will be the final increase in the Copy Count.

On the very good side, the roster is now full. Please welcome: Jonathan, Bruce, Brad, Rick, and Heather. I hope you will also be happy to welcome Scott back into our fold--go and sin against MINAC no more.

Gil and I have decided to give a trial run to the EGOBOO polls found in MYRIAD, let us know what you think. They are located on a white sheet for your mailing convenience, and on a master located after the Con and Rules.

A Special Note on the Purpose of MOTiVE:
I have had conversations with four of you in particular in which statements such as these were used: MOTiVE is...; or MOTiVE isn't just mailing comments; or MOTiVE should not be just game stats... My reply to that as OE has two parts. Firstly, read Article One of our constitution. Secondly, use your common sense. MOTiVE is what we make it. If something is very wrong call for a vote, change the Constitution. Remember though, MOTiVE will never be homogeneous.

Sorry about last issue's typos and mix-ups, it really was Issue Three. The **IRS demon** that plagued me is no more--I'll do better.

Happy Holidays,

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Issue Three

The Constitution of MOTIVE

12/10/89

Article I

MOTIVE is an Amateur Press Alliance (APA) designed to promote communication between role-playing gamers.

Article II

The Official Editor (OE) shall see that the mailings are distributed to all members. The OE shall create all rules pertaining to deadlines, dues, maximum membership and any other matters related to mailing-to-mailing government. The OE shall be elected by a simple majority of the voting members for a period of one year.

Article III

The Constitution can be changed by a two-thirds majority vote of the membership.

The Rules of MOTIVE

11/15/90

The prime directive: each member has control over their own submissions, therefore, **have fun**. ALL copyrights to any material in **MOTIVE** revert to their original owners.

1. **Membership and dues** are $15.00 per year for six bi-monthly mailings. A first class postage membership costs no less than $20.00. Contact the OE for specific prices. Membership is first come first serve, until the roster limit is met.

2. The **roster limit is 25.** A small group of people who choose to have a joint membership count as one membership, receive one copy, have one vote, and pay one set of dues.

3. **Membership termination** occurs when MINAC is not met, dues are not paid, and through resignation.

4. The **copy count** (CC) refers to the number of complete copies of your submission that you send to the OE. The CC is presently **30**. If you send one less than the CC, you will receive the **MOTIVE** without your submission, and the OE's wrath. Any number less than this and your submission will not be included.

5. **Minimum activity** (MINAC) is four pages (two pages front and back), every other mailing, split any way you wish. Of these four, three must be completely original to motive. Overdue material will not count towards MINAC.

6. The **copy must be readable** and of NLQ typeface or better. Submissions should be reproduced on double-sided (front and back), colored paper. Please stick to one color, per submission. Send a single-sided, white copy of your originals with your submission, so that a record can be kept of **MOTIVE**.

7. **Collate** your material, but **DO NOT STAPLE IT**.

8. **Deadlines are deadlines.** Beginning with the first issue (5/15/90) the deadlines will be the 15th of every odd-numbered month.

9. The **waitlist** will consist of five persons waiting for a membership to open. Here are the rules:
   A. Waitlisters maintain their position on the list by writing the OE by every issue's deadline. A position is granted on a first come, first serve basis.
   B. Waitlisters may purchase **MOTIVE** from the OE for $3.00 (if available).
   C. Waitlisters may contribute to **MOTIVE**, but receive no vote or copy of **MOTIVE** (unless they buy a copy).
   D. Should a position come open, the top waitlister will be invited to join by sending their dues and submission. If this waitlister fails to respond then any waitlister may attempt to join that same mailing, by having their submission and dues in, etc.

10. The **Official Editor** (OE) nominations are made with the submissions to the fourth issue (November 15, 1990). Elections occur with the fifth issue and the results are made known in the sixth issue. All elections and nominations are made on a separate ballot and and sent to the Official Teller, not the OE.

11. The **Official Teller** (OT) for all elections is chosen each year before the fourth issue. The OT is responsible for tallying the votes and reporting the results in their next submission.

12. **The Current OE**
Wayne Peacock

The Current OT
Deena McKinney-Martin

IF YOU'VE READ THE BEGINNING, AND DIDN'T READ THE CONSTITUTION AND RULES AGAIN, THEN YOU'VE PISSED OFF THE

OE!!

GO NOW AND READ RULES SIX AND FOUR, FOR THERE HAVE BEEN CHANGES THAT WILL BE FOLLOWED TO THE LETTER.

THE LAST WHOLE MOTIVE EGOBOO POLL FOR 1990!

I can see your troubled faces. What, exactly, is an Egoboo Poll? From the Latin "Egous Boostus", literally, "the ritual of patting upon the back". Here and there in the APA universe, the Egoboo Poll has been an attempt to recognize the relative value of submissions to a given APA, and to reward excellence in a profoundly moving way. In the model from which our experiment was taken, the individual with the highest aggregate point total is designated APA President, with the only benefit being the placement of their zine in the front of each mailing for the year to follow.

How does it work? Each contributing member of the APA (and joint memberships were tricky to work out on this) has 25 points to award in each of eight catagories. No more than 5 points in a given catagory should be given to any individual. In addition, there is the "Roll Your Own" catagory, a free-form place to bestow special honors on worthy individuals. In this catagory, creativity counts.

Here's a brief elaboration of the catagories:

1. Best Graphics— this catagory is for layout, illos, the "look" of the zine.
2. Best Gaming Philosopher— this catagory embraces the "larger questions" of gaming...ethics, morality, tough human issues.
3. Best Gaming Huckster— best advocate of a given system of play.
4. Best Gaming Worldbuilder— best presentation of aids to gaming.
5. Best Storyteller— Best recounting of adventures played.
6. Best Mailing Comments— just what it says (sorry, Stewart).
7. Verbal Creativity— best use of language (English or other).
8. Best All-Around Style— best integration of form and content.

On the issue of who can vote: this first time out, to try and open the experience up to as many people as possible, it has been decided to let anyone who has contributed to MOTIVE (and who is still on the roster) have a full set of votes. As for figuring out how you should split the vote for joint memberships, it is true in most cases that individual contributions to joint zines are pretty clearly delineated. Points should be awarded accordingly.

But, I hear some of you say, what if I think this is a colossally stupid idea, and a total waste of my valuable time? What if I would rather catch a PBS special on platapi mating than fill out your dumb poll? Rather eat fire and broken glass than waste one nanosecond on this supremely boneheaded idea?

Well, we've thought of that. If you'd rather not play, don't. There are 27 names on the list. If we do not receive votes from at least 14 people, we won't count any of it, and we dutifully promise not to inflict the idea on y'all again for at least a year.

After you have completed your ballot, you may send it to the OE for tabulation. The due date for ballots is JANUARY 15, 1991. That's JANUARY 15, 1991.

In the unlikely event of a tie for first place, tiees will be declared Tag-Team Presidents of MOTIVE, and can take turns going first in the mailing each issue.

Do not confuse this procedure with the ballot for OE. That is a different critter. Different procedures. You send the ballot for that to the Official Teller (as opposed to the Official Penn).

Above all, folks, have fun with this. It's not designed to hurt feelings, or settle the fate of the human species on Terra Firma. Remember, "the world will little note, nor long remember what we do here".

1990 MOTIVE EGOBOO POLL

NAME	1 BEST GRAPHICS.	2 BEST PHILOSOPHER.	3 BEST HUCKSTER.	4 BEST WORLD-BUILDER.	5 BEST STORY-TELLER.	6 BEST MAILING COMMENTS.	7 BEST VERBAL CREATIVITY.	8 BEST ALL-AROUND STYLE.	Roll Your Own
Darell Autry									
Robert Barnes									
John Baungarten									
Carl Buehler									
Pat Buehler									
Jackie Cassida									
Greg Dillingham									
Peter Gareis									
Walter Gwathney									
Sonia Handforth-Kome									
Jonathan Hanna									
Gilbert Head									
A.J. Hoge									
Kevin Ingle									
Greg Keyes									
Stewart MacWilliam									
Deena McKinney-Martin									
Keith Martin									
Jon Monk									
Paul Patino									
Wayne Peacock									
Heather Pritchett									
Nicky Rea									
Chad Russell									
Michael Schapira									
David Wendelken									
(Jessica French ?)									

READ RULES FOR VOTING! SEND TO OE BY 1-15-91! HAVE FUN!!

Due to a computing error (well, actually, I seem to have misplaced my disk) I am unable to present the current instalment of The Snake of Forever. I hope that it is missed. It's fun to write something that I don't have to agonize over as I do when I write something I'm trying to sell.

In a frantic attempt to come up with an emergency contribution this month, I would like to present a couple of ideas I've kept on the backburner, And yes, one of them is a gaming idea. First however: a contest. Anyone who can tell me what language the Temeki are speaking in the Snake of Forever will have the dubious honor of being a character in the story. And don't tell me they speak Temeki. I hate that. Clues: 1. I have a degree in Anthropology and one of my hobbies is reconstructive linguistics.

2. It's not French

3. It's not Italian either

4. Don't rule out proto-Dravidian

5. Gilbert made a good guess, but the Kadzkakpun is not an Uktena.

On to the game. I recently read a new translation of the Navajo creation myth called Dine Bahane. I lived on the Navajo reservation as a child and can testify that it is a very good translation. The clarity and consistency of Navajo mythology started me thinking about he possibilities of a game based upon the creation of a mythology. Players would assume the roles of mythical beings and powers. To some extent they would get to design these roles. At the beginning of the game, a minimum of beings and objects would exist. In the Norse creation myth, for example, there is at first only an abyss and a place where fire and ice meet called Ginunga gap. In the ice is Ymir, the first giant, who is licked out of the ice by a cosmic cow, and the story proceeds from there.

This mythology will be unique, the product of interaction. I will design the basic concepts and the rules under which the deities and powers must operate. Most of these will be implicit and must be discovered by the gods as they go about creating and destroying in their new world. The result should be a mythic cycle the dimensions of which will be unpredictable to every one, including myself. The game will be played correspondence-style, with players submitting moves to me. I will respond, and in my future motive entries, I will publish the results in the form of a text. If face to face interaction becomes absolutely necessary at some point, something may be worked out.

Gods are powerful, often whimsical, usually at cross-purposes to one another. They are very rarely all-powerful, even those that function as creators. They usually create new things from old things.In the Navajo creation myth, the First People pass through a variety of worlds before reaching this one. Each world changes them a little more (They start out as insects) and new things are created, including true Navajos.Many fixtures of this world were fashioned of items from the old world, including the sacred mountains of Dinetah,which were made of such things as Abalone and jet. This theme is found around the world. Often the world itself is made from slain elder gods.The gods have children, deities proliferate. The cosmic soap opera continues.

In norse mythology, Ymir parthogenically gives birth to a man and woman from his (ackk) armpit. This couple produces Odin, Vili, and Ve,who eventually slay their father.

"Of Ymir's flesh
Was the earth created
Of his blood the sea,
Of his bones the hills.
Of his hair the trees and plants
Of his Skull, the heavens...

And in Babylonian mythology:

When the heaven above had not been named
And the Earth below had not been called
by a name
When Apsu, the primeval, their begetter
Mummu and Tiamat,she who gave birth to
them all...

The gods born of Tiamat later kill her

He cut the arteries of her blood
And scattered it on the North Wind
...He split her open like a mussel into
Two parts
Half of her he set in place and formed
The sky as a roof

One cautionary note. Gods are not merely extremely super super heros. Most represent either natural or social forces or both. Thor does not merely have the power to "shoot" lightning. He is Thunder, personified. Marduk is the metaphorical representation of divine kingship. To think of them as " really high level characters" is a mistake.

Myth or Dreamtime was the time when things became as they are and miracles walked the earth. Read some mythology. If you want to play, let me know.

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TALES OF THE BRASS ~~BEET~~ MONKEY

A BIT OF EXTREME(1st ?) BIZARRNESS FROM THE BLACK RECESSES OF THE MIND OF PAUL PATINO

Let me begin this episode of the monkey once again with a short statement of intent, and as per usual, it will not necessarily be in the order in which I plan to deal with the items named:

1) mailing comments- please note, as, in my mind, the quality of submissions presented in issue three was so uniformly high, I intend to devote substantially more time and energy in to mailing comments than I have previously.

2) a moderate amount of text regarding the pros and cons of multiple gamemaster games, as represented both by the Sentinels/Ward Major/ Minutemen game, which has had no fewer than eight different GMs during its several incarnations, and by the UNISO game currently being run by the OE, and myself(both Champions campaigns).

3) nothing; there is no third thing.

4) a few concerns (a tirade?? Paul?? C'mon!).

5) an interesting Champions vehicle.

So without further ado, the comfy mailing comments:

Mike- if an award be given for most improved 'zine, you should certainly receive it. This is some first rate work, and I am gratified to see you producing up to your potential. I do feel that I should qualify one portion of your article to the readership, in that Yorrik was designed to play in a game that I ran, I guess about three years ago, and since the new Champions rule came out, I have not sat down with Mike to revise him. Gee, Mike, I wish you had provided me with this detailed an origin when you played him. As far as the survey goes, I'm tempted to land on the cynical side of the fence and say 'It's all hogwash' or at least of only marginal value, largely because with three rather predictable exceptions, it seems mostly to show a wide, and not particularly surprising diversity amongst the contributors. We all appreciate (I think) Fantasy/SF, but our tastes seem as varied as the colors of the rainbow; still I do think it was an interesting exercise and am interested in seeing the results of the rest of the survey. To the AD+D stuff: While my first impulse was to dismiss it, as I read on, I found myself recalling with some fondness my first role-playing experiences, and while now most gamers speak out against Monty Haulism and powergaming, I think most of us began playing within these phenomena and, dare we admit it, ENJOYED IT, for some time. It will probably be of benefit to us to see some things which harken back to our early years of role-playing, so by all means, keep up the fine work.- **THOUGHT ADMIRAL: OUT.**

Kevin and Sonia- Being that I am presently bereft of a CoC game to become psychotic in myself, I really have no desire what so ever to here about other people having such a good time in this manner. Seriously Sonia, your presentation is excellent; I particularly like the including of the letters as letters; it lends a very Lovecraftian flavor to the entire article. I can't figure it though, when I played, I always thought we resolved the situation in a bit more of what could be called an objectively successful manner. I also just can't believe that Kevin would have trouble saying no to anyone about anything. Kevin, I believe your views on game systems are close enough to my own to say ' see, great minds think alike', your additional point is taken however, re. the great dust magnet. Who said you didn't like fantasy? Also, I'm calling you on the 'screwing other players' complaint; that was an atmosphere fostered by the gamemaster and you know it. Besides, wouldn't you prefer to be killed by another player rather than one of the GM's insanely tough monsters which always seemed to have at least one cursed item in their hoard. I tend to agree about what should happen in a CoC game, but in practice it doesn't; not because of some overriding desire of players to screw one-another, but because the typical settings tend to foster players whose characters can have very different, sometimes contradictory, goals; something which in games, especially CoC, is not necessarily bad, and can definitely enhance everyone's enjoyment. *finis.*

Nicky- It continues to surprise me that people still cannot seem to *play* what they are playing. I suspect though, that a great deal of this stems from what you are playing. As an admitted advocate of the Hero system in all of it's incarnations, I believe that anyone playing a Hero system game will probably create exactly what they want to play(this being one of the many strengths of the Hero system); and then **play** it. It should be obvious from powers/skills/disadvantages how the character will function in the game world, so the other players and the GM should be able to take appropriate action. Additionally, I've come to believe that if someone is continually not playing in character, screwing up, or generally ruining everyones good time via some other device, the player should probably be confronted about it and, if an accord is not forthcoming, asked to leave the game. Q.E.D

Jackie- Any time I go to a convention and enjoy a game, I consider it a very pleasant surprise. Being spoiled on what I consider to be an exceptionally high caliber group of people to game with on a regular basis, I find that most (but not all) convention gamers (even the so-called 'Masters' and 'Grand Masters') fail, often miserably so, to measure up to my own weekly groups. Subsequently, I go to cons to game with friends whom I don't see as often as I'd like; and to party. With as many cons as you've been to I'm suprised that you're just now griping about these people. I am very empathetic about the 'incompetent GM' syndrome which seems to crop up with unfortunate regularity at cons; this ruined what would have otherwise been an enjoyable Champions game at MOC Battles, year before last. Oh yes, try blue-booking; it seems to have worked well in my experience. **game over.**

Pat + Carl- What I want to know is exactly how you managed to extract that picture from Jim, let alone get him to ok printing it. Muskie seems an interesting character who must be great fun to play. I've long been a fan of *secret* origins; particularly those that are so secret, not even you know what they are. Archetypical GMs eh? Seem a bit stereotypical to me; Ha Ha, really quite amusing. Dingos and Donkeys? PrunePursuits?? Who are you kidding? I tend to agree about not really worrying about simple/complex; I figure that if I'm enjoying myself, the system is not so complex as to keep me from enjoying myself (I know, I know, it's a tautology, but in this case it applies). **TTFN.**

AJ- When are you going to get Jess to actually print something? Your new presentation is, in a word, fantastic. I only wish I organized my own 'zine as well. I can occasionally be convinced to play a war game so... Hopefully, by the time this sees print, you will have begun a continuing Call of Cthulhu game so that we Athenians may suddenly be introduced to the 'new character every week' sort of game (think you'll ever try to play Norskamerika again?). Re Dionysus- It appears you have designed a game world with a truly unique flavor; as from all accounts you are an excellent GM as well, I would hope that you will soon run something that I can play in. Re Apollo- Interesting thoughts on the indirect approach; and rather fiendish tactics. How does it come out when these tactics are employed against each other? end.

Jon- how do you keep doing it? Re E vs. C- ok, but, I would say that players should have at least as much consideration as plot, and a big part of players is their characters, (and yes, you guessed it) of which a big part is the system. Re Atlanta- Great! Fantastic!! Super!!! How about an indepth interview with each character in future issues; that could well make us players clarify origins, drop adventure ideas, reveal subplots we'd like to see, etc... I must say, Sersus *certainly* does the finest job of concealing his knowledge of Edge; in fact, I cannot imagine anyone being better at it. Incidentally to all who have never been in a game that Jon runs, he really does come up with the most creative ways to remove his characters from fights/investigations/general focus of anyone I've ever seen. STOP.

John- *Et Tu Brute;* this has got to be one of the stupidest quotes in the history of drama; I mean, Brutus just stuck a knife in Caesars gut- Yep, Julius, looks like he's with them too. Re sanity- My suggestion would be to try modifying the **Chaosium** system; maybe make base sanity 5 x Ego (initial limit 99) with a further upper limit of ninety-nine minus KS- Cthulhu Mythos Kn x 5 and use percentile dice. Then get some copies of the CoC sanity problem and loss rules and modify them to suit Hero system rules; say making ego roles at appropriate minuses when the time comes. Re Cthulhu Beasties- Yuk!!! my own tendency when dealing with anything very tough is to make an extremely incomplete stat. sheet, then kind of wing it. It does appear though that you've done your homework in getting good simulation of attributed abilities. Also- Loved 'little lucy muffin-tail'. **End Transmission.**

Keith- Commander Comet is known to me; good to see him in print and type, it makes these characters so much easier to read (figure out how to exploit). I like the idea you had for his history the first time better though. ***et al.***

Deena- Re gender and gaming- 1) unless any of the above are planned no and even if yes, not necessarily the female (mostly I expect to help myself) 2) no; 3) I expect her/them to help, but then I expect everyone to help. Re- the campaign- neat. As usual you run it with your own unique flair (So, what do you call those large, geese-like creatures?). Do they always turn into Whimsey-wars?? Seriously, the way I saw it, you are definitely running a game that fully lives up to your usual high standard; hope I can make an occasional guest appearance. BYE NOW.

Peter- it's always nice to see someone use such convenient source material as undersea maps; that stuffs floating around everywhere if people would only look for it. The 'gates' idea is nice also; I remember them mostly from Ultima III, but have often thought them a cool thing to have popping off in a fantasy campaign; the acquired iron-allergy syndrome is a nice touch. Oh, by the way, is there any point in inventing a new language other than just to show that you can? PS- Brass Monkey can be investigated at your nearest package store: Ask for it by name. STOP

Robert- Welcome! Pleasure to have you aboard. Your own bent in gaming is kind of unique amongst the current contributorship, but any commentary you care to provide on the many aspects of gaming would be welcome. I seem to remember T-2000 providing a fairly handy method for quickly determining NPC motivations using a deck of playing cards; perhaps you could turn it into something more generally useful for all types of game systems. Interesting scenario, but in the current climate of glasnost and democratic revolutions, hasn't the whole premise of T-2000 become a little dated? Let's here about this matter of problem players too. AU REVOIR.

Gil- Good observations; particularly about what you like to see in a game. I tend to think that most of us would agree that your generic statement, when it is in fact the case, will cause most of us to have a good time. It really does depend on what you are wanting to play though doesn't it? Well you can probably tell by now that I have put about as much time into my mailing comments this issue as you typically do, so I'll draw yours to a close now. 💾 🌹 🌹 ➾

Chad- Although you may have everyone fooled for the moment I shall soon reveal the truth about the Void, namely that he is in fact a logical positivist, who is presently trying to resurrect that Ayreian movement at a major research university in Yankee-land. Re. Psi-War- Basically the same as last issue, although I must admit some disappointment; I thought last issue would wrap it up; I really wanted to know how it came out. Re. the thought- could be. Probably. Most likely. Definitely. Popular opinion says its already gone. Actually it sounds like a good idea, but does not Steve Jackson Games already offer a similar service? If you decide to go for it (I really thought the Psi-War would have cured your Herculean Labor Syndrome) let me know; short of giving you lots of money, I'll help if I can. **Flatline.**

Stewart- I recall the first appearance of Knuckles, way back in the interactive that Beth ran lo those many years ago (A special prize for you if you can remember some stuff about the character that I played in that one. Hint: It often involves Tabasco sauce; the special prize that is). Cool pic and character design. Let's hear about Echieth; try to include the hows, whys, and wherefors of the system changes though. ditto.

John- Jesus, you'd think that Jo(h)n was a popular name or something. A hearty welcome to you as well. I don't play any of the systems your sheets are for, so they are about as useful to me as another hole in my head; they are however a first-class effort. Intelligently designed, well thought out and good ideas. I would be particularly interested in seeing alternate sheets for say Hero system (maybe without the space on the front for the sketch. Also, how about some feedback on the other submissions; I know you've read them. **Closed.**

D- This is one of the best ideas I've heard for introducing a bunch of new folks to Champions: I'm afraid that the Department of Acronyms is going to have to call moose on C.A.S.T.L.E. though, there are already too many of the blasted things floating around as it is.(Creative. Autonomous. Super-powered. Transvestite. Lesbian. Elves., was it ??). Even if people haven't done much gaming before, this works; I mean, **everybody** has read comic books. I just wonder re- the Guardian armor, when they fire their energy blast, does it make a keen sound? Well, hope to see you around Athens again soon. **THAT'S ALL FOLKS !!**

Well, it looks like some persons have fallen to the dread MINAC!! They will be mourned; but you know what they say, "If ya gotta go, go with a smile!" Now, about this business of multiple GM games: I would say that there are pretty much two sorts of these 1) the kind which has two people acting as co-GMs (typified by Kevin and Sonia's CoC game and Wayne's and my own UNISO game) and 2) the sort which has several persons who take turns running, as they get ideas (I believe we could likely all think of three or four like this). I will endeavour now to address the pros and cons of each type. Re- #1 This sort of GMing can be especially useful if you are running a game with a large number of players, however, it can be quite handy if the group is small as well. As players often have different ideas of what is important in the game, they often like to split up; with two GMs you can handle both groups and not have players sitting around bored for so long. Also, having two GMs allows one to bounce ideas off of someone who is already aware of the goals of the major NPC's. This can show you inconsistencies within the plot, how it does(nt) fit in with the campaign overall, where you've missed an opportunity, or what might be a neat direction to go within the adventure as it develops. On a more practical level, a second GM can make bookkeeping easier, or say run the combat if they are more fluent in the game mechanics. While two GM's might not cut each others work in half, I would say it probably cuts it by a quarter or a third. The list of cons in this sort of co-reffing is far shorter: GM-miscommunication. One GM tells one group of players one thing; the other tell another group something else/contradictory. This list does however pre-suppose that the two co-GMs in fact like each other and can work together.

Now, for the other sort of game, matters become somewhat more convoluted. In this sort of game the work required of each GM is in fact divided by the number of GMs for the amount of time played. This sort of arrangement also allows for a wide variety of GMing styles; the same group of players can play big fights, skulking about cities, political intrigue, just about anything, as each GM will probably have some particular type of adventure which they enjoy and are good at running. This type of game can also keep GMs from burning out so quickly, and if the GMing duties are properly spread around, will keep the characters at roughly the same experience level. The cons in this game will be somewhat different. The main problem tends to be one GM doing something which totally fucks up another GM's plans; i.e. GM(a) has Dr. Conquestor get killed in a nuclear explosion as the hook to some extra-diminsional adventure when GM(b) had envisioned Dr. Conquestor being holed up in his Antarctica base preparing the **Q981** molecule for release into the ozone layer for his next adventure. Being that GMs typically don't want to reveal the plot, or even villains being used in the next adventure, this sort of thing can happen with alarming frequency. The other major problem with this sort of game is when one of the GMs takes the campaign off onto a tangent (say mucking about, stranded on the planet 1.8) which the rest of the players don't enjoy, with him being the only one who knows the method of getting out without it seeming ludicrous. This is often compounded by the fact that the GM who did this *thinks* it is a great idea (otherwise he probably wouldn't have run it) and whose feeling would be hurt if everyone said "look, we think planet 1.8 ***sucks***." Well, there are most likely many more pros and cons to the multiple GM games, but these are the ones which seem most important to me: I would welcome comments from other contributors RE- what I missed/got wrong.

Fourthly, I would like to voice a couple of concerns RE the direction in which several 'zines have headed. Let me preface these remarks by saying the 'zines to which I will refer are all very well written and quite interesting, and I enjoyed reading them very much. I was a bit alarmed to see in issue three, that the number of 'zines devoting large portions of their space to literarily chronicling campaigns had jumped 300%; in fact these 'zines totaled some 45 pages. I wonder if this is the direction that contributors should be aiming in. I freely admit that I very much enjoyed the first installment from the Void, and looked forward to its conclusion; even in this exemplary presentation, however, I, well, question its utility for anything other than entertainment, in that the readers are never offered any insights into the motives (especially as the game progressed) of either of the two PCs or any of the multitude of NPCs, let alone what the plot that the GM had in mind was. Also the personae mentioned are absolutely vacant unless someone has access to Operation: Mindgames, and even if one does, I am suspecting that the motivations if not the powers of the individuals have been altered to some degree. The other 'zines of this sort which appeared, while comparably entertaining, receive basically the same criticisms. If these are the sorts of 'zines which are going to become prevalent in Motive, I would suggest the writers look at Strikeforce from Hero Games; in it, Aaron Allston covers about seven actual years of gaming in six pages, along with commentary which is generally helpful; his specific campaign is used as a source of information which can be made generally useful, which he does. I guess what this all boils down to is that I have some fear that Motive may turn into a sort of " Oh Yeah!; well look... I can do it too!!!" I won't even bother to invite comments on this, as I fully expect my shit to get jumped for it.

The fifth and final bit of substance which I intend to proffer is a write-up of the vehicle which I just purchased for Elvis M'ubatu, my Orc-marshall in Wayne's Norskamerika campaign.

PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE ! !

1963 Harley-Davidson 'Fat Bob' - with sidecar

STATS	COST
Str - 18	8
Body - 11	1
Size - motorcycle	5
Def - 4	6
Dex - 10	0
Spd - 4	20
Move - 16 (x 2 non-combat)	13
Characteristic Total	50
Powers	
2 levels with movement - improved suspension	7
Cha + Powers Total	57
Disadvantages:	
DNPC - normal (hog mechanic in whatever town I'm in) - useful non-combat skills - 11 or less	10
Distinctive features - '63 Fat Bob - not concealable - major reaction (everyone thinks it is extremely cool, so it often attracts crowds of gawkers)	20
1D6 Unluck	5
Disadvantage total -	35
Disad. + Character points spent (5)	60

Well, I believe that this will finally bring to a close of the third episode of the of that funky monkey; Y'all come back now, y'hear!!

STOP

Oh yeah, almost forgot; almost that is . . .

IN THE NEXT BOTTLE OF THAT FUNKY MONKEY :

1. CHILLIN N' SWILLIN WITH ELVIS !
(M'UBATU THAT IS)

2. YET AGAIN, MAILING COMMENTS ! !

5. REFLICTIONS ON RECENT EVENTS WHICH EXPERTS FEEL MAY HERALD THE END OF CIVILIZATION AS WE KNOW IT ! ! !

3. THE REAL REAL TRUTH ABOUT THE VOID ! ! ! !

4. ART ! ! ! ! !

6. AND MUCH MUCH MORE ! ! ! ! ! !

What's on Mel's Mind

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As i sit in front of this computer i am reminded of one of the myriad reasons that i gave up being a computer science major in college, before i gave up college that is, but if you're lucky you'll never find out any of them. HI!, my name is Jonathan Rowley aka Jon Downs. Apologies to everyone for adding to the Jon totals and congratulations to Hanna and Monk on efficient use of alphabet. For those who don't know me i'm from the pre-saturday night session Asheville days, i was in Asheville during those times but weekend gaming violates a long standing personal policy of not letting anything interfere with my drinking. Of course my primary claim to fame currently is that i live with his royal highness AMPERION DUKE OF LIGHTNING, THANE OF THUNDER, EARL OF ELECTRICITY, COUNT OF KILOWATTS, LORD OF THE MULTIVERSE HE FOR WHOM THE WORLD TURNS ON ITS AXIS. God knows it gives me a reason to go on living. To all those who do know me, try not to hold it against me i'm trying to turn over a new leaf.

Besides being a college dropout i manage a B Dalton bookstore watch alot of sports and game every Sunday night. i would like to preface all future statements with a couple of notes;

1 Anything i may say in my articles is my opinion and as a consequence probably utter bullshit, i tend to say and write alot of things off the cuff more for effect than an actual statement of fact or belief maybe if i had stayed in college and gotten my philosophy degree i would know myself and the world well enough to make valid comments on life but i doubt it.

2 As far as entertainment goes i am basically a shallow person i like happy endings and upbeat music, this tends to influence alot of my likes and dislikes about gaming. For instance i am apt to enjoy any game that is well refereed and i am not expected to seriously play some sort of psycopath. i am of the firm belief that the gamemaster is far more important than the system.

3 Although i have been doing it a long time my gaming experience is limited in terms of actual games played, usually being governed by the likes of whoever the current gamemaster of choice is. The point being that while i feel i can definately input in game terms i would also like to comment on a couple of topics i feel are related such as music, books and movies. If there are any objections feel free to let me know.

Well i think i said what i wanted, maybe. Anyway i am not going to make any comments on articles to this point because i want to actually finish one before i say anything about anyone elses.

The group i am currently playing in has just finished a few months of solid Shadowrunning. i hear that there are alot of complaints with the game and am curious to hear them. We did alter a few things but i ended up playing the most satisfying mage of my gaming career with only one rarely used offensive spell. We have now gone back to a fantasy game of our gamemasters invention called Penultimate which i believe Mike is going to dicuss at least briefly, its an interesting game that i am reserving judgement on. The first session that i played in it i was the only newcomer in a group that had been playing almost exclusively with each other most of their gaming lives. It was not conducive to alot of fun, but i persevered mostly due to a Champions character who i rather enjoyed and will take this oppurtunity to present.

Infinti was born out of a desire to combine that most useless of Champions power stretching, and a bad car commercial and wind up with a viable character. At the time to my knowledge i was the only one to attempt such a feat but i later learned that Stewart had at least developed a character using stretching as the primary power. But i can sense your anticipation so without further ado i give you Infiniti, otherwise known as silly putty man.

Rex Flagg was on his way to location in South America to film his upcoming movie "Death to South American Mad Scientist Drug Lord Terrorists VI" when as luck would have it his plane developed problems and was forced to land at a small air strip belonging to a South American mad scientist drug lord terrorist who happened to have the previous five movies on videotape and showed them as motivational tapes to his employees. After he was finished dissecting Rex he realized that he had a use for his brain and preserved it in whatever that goop is mad scientists preserve brains in. Our scientist, we'll call him Frank, was working on an artificial host bodies that would support a brain, thats where Rex comes in.

Rex woke up to find that his new body had no natural shape and that in reality he had been reduced to a braincase stuck in a big ball of rubber. His braincase had a small magnetic "engine" that he could use as muscles to shape his body as human and function normally which made things more livable but only until he found out Franks future plans for him, to film his brain being dissected and use it for future motivational tapes.

Rexs' escape plans hinged upon getting to a more powerful engine for his body that was kept under strong guard, unfortunately for him he was totally incapable of any action that might change that. Fortunately for Rex there were heroes on the scene as Franks number had come up. During the confusion Rex got the more powerful engine and succesfully interfered enough in the heroes raid on Franks place that Frank got away and he had to defend himself on charges of complicity.

After the confusion settled down Rex returned to Hollywood to find several lucrative offers waiting for him, managed to get some basic combat training and is now combining a movie career with occasional acts of heroism.

Infiniti is the result of lots of promotion on the part of his studio while he is basically a good guy the concepts behind true acts of heroism are new to him and though he is headed in that direction it is from a direction that was totally alien to him before. Due to his fame and it being used as a plot device in his hugely succesful movies the entire world is completely aware on his dependence on his larger engine and how to separate him from it, it happens at least once a movie.

In actual combat he tends to do things like shapechange into popular characters appropriatte to the situation i.e. Babe Ruth with a bat right before he slugs someone. Although in actual game terms Infiniti has wound up being more of a utility player than a combatant spending most of his time making sure no DNPCs' get hurt and shapechanging to a small helicopter to carry the team to the roof.

As far as powers and limitations go, many are useless in cold weather as his rubber body freezes and it takes all his energy just to move, and magnetic fields completely disrupt his magnetic control over his muscles. His superleap requires that he coils and in order to regenerate he must go pick up the chunk that was blown off.

Well Mike needs the computer so i'll save Infinitis questionable stats for next time. Have Fun.

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TTTTT H   H EEEEE   BBBB  L     U   U EEEEE    V   V IIIII EEEEE W   W
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  T   H   H E       B   B L     U   U E         V V    I   E     W W W
  T   H   H EEEEE   BBBB  LLLLL  UUU  EEEEE      V   IIIII EEEEE  W W
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MAILING COMMENTS

Bolts of Bedevilment: Nice variety

Fishy: I *found* the formatting a bit tiring; however, after each issue I become more intrigued with Cthulhu as an alternative gaming system.

Hemispheres: your amusing DM handout would be a nice suppliment to this. I play Civilization and have browsed through some of the others.

Tail: overall enjoyable entry with that well presented champions article, and Sersus's observations on Edge, which are beginning to coalesce into a coherent whole for me.

-there's a ferret biting my feet-

Tales: I would have liked a brief bio. of Master Magic with the stats.

Secret is a Vulcanizing Deodorant: Thanks (for the understanding) and sorry (about the numbering). Love the name lists; I need them for my campaign, for my own lists are limited.

Snake: I enjoy the prose, but would like to see a half page blurb on you and yours preceeding each entry. At least a summary of the story (it has been two months and a lot of reading since) and an identifying name.

Recently Upbraided: Welcome and I enjoyed the scenario development.

The Game Has No Feet [thus it cannot flee my deadly missiles,...very fast...unless it swims or flys or teleports or...o...shit]. Glad you enjoyed your first sojourn into the land of musical dungeons. See **Issue 4** entry. I hope to bombard you with more tunes enroute to and at that holy city, Jerusalem. Ishkabibil, mon.

Death to All Attic Fans: Milieu to you too, my friends. Bless you.

Null: I really enjoyed Knuckles McGee.

Void: Why a debate on talisman or fetish? You get the same results with either if you believe or if your gaming system doesn't distinguish at that level of detail [complex or simple?]. I think the gamer/store list would be useful, but I wouldn't be on it. Now that I've cleansed my game world of gaming nerds, fanatics, and other forms of pitiful vermin [note: the operative word here is pity], I would rather take my chances picking and choosing who I invite to campaign or accept a campaigning invitation from. I'm no longer so desperate to play. I'd rather play RISK than game in a crowd even vaguely resembling some of my former experiences. NOTE: Please read the above as if a calm person is speaking; it sounds like frenzied elitism, but I think you understand my intent.

Cyber: Did anyone ever tell you that you had nice sheets?

Impervious Elbow Pus: Where is Wayne? If you see him, here is the name and address of your newest member (you've got the money already). You'll see him first in January.

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DISCUSSION, ISSUE 3: COMPLEX-SIMPLEX

Everyone who responded to the inquiry about the simple versus complex system covered my opinions for me. Thanks for the help. Here is a concise summary of our responses:

1) A gaming system is too complex if it inhibits smooth and enjoyable play.
2) A gaming system is too simple if it does not satisfy the player's gaming needs.
3) Gaming systems are irrelevant if the GM is too complex, too simple, and/or inhibits smooth and enjoyable play.
4) Substitute 'a player' for 'the GM' in #3.
5) All of the above.

DISCUSSION, ISSUE 4: SEX AND ISMS

~~Dana~~ (sorry, Deena. There is no Dana, only Zul.) Deena brought up a good point in **MOTIVE** issue 3. She listed her query in three direct and specific questions. Here are my three direct and specific answers.

1) Females are never expected to be the sole purveyors of refreshment in any home I have ever gamed in. In our current Wyrmquest campaign at my giant Zesta box, we each take turns providing the evening meal. Since we have four regulars (one a female), we each buy dinner for four once a month. Everyone supplies their own drinks. If someone forgets theirs or has a money crunch, we share. Hell, we share anyway. I probably do the most serving because my position at the table allows easiest access to the refrigerator. Still, everyone freshens other's drinks and such whenever they get up.

2) See #1. My ex-wife is not a gamer; in fact, she disliked almost all of the people I gamed with in college. Her complaints about my gaming buddies (she called them the Goon Squad) helped spur me to find "normal" folks to game with. She liked my last Athens group and would like this one as well. But I digress too far. When I ran a game at our house, Robin did no work for us. She said she wouldn't, and I never considered asking. When I have played at other houses and the host's girlfriend or wife did not play, we were always expected to fend for ourselves. The men/boys who would have condoned women doing "women's work" either never had a girlfriend or were outnumbered.

3) See #1 and #2. The logistics of hosting a game are the same as playing. The group is there to work together to achieve their objective, whatever that may entail.

So, yes, I believe as Deena does. Now, how about the treatment of the female character? In a fantasy milieu we have a limited number of role models: princess, whore, warrior dyke, priestess. How often do we see a fighting-woman who is not insulted by male recognition of her sensuality? Doesn't it seem that female characters and NPC's suffer a higher incidence of sexual extremism (frigidity and sluttishness) than their male counterparts? A few direct questions:

1) Do female characters often have more clearly defined, if not over defined, sexuality?
2) If so, is this a player/GM fault or a cultural one? Is it necessarily bad or good?
3) What are your observations on males playing female characters and vice versa.
4) Will you supply an example of your own cross-dressing?

BABYLON: A RETURN TO TUNES IN THE DUNES

A long, long time ago I can still remember in a galaxy anchored down in Anchorage, I used to create what we termed musical dungeons. I knew they were a lot of fun for me, but didn't realize the extent to which they amused the players. My current gaming group has two of my original (preUGA perverted AD&D) players, and they have mentioned these pop extravaganzas on several occasions. So I turned the long running Babylon adventure into a musical. Here is some background information and a brief synopsis. As you read, please recall that I let the players choose their actions and the Fates determine the outcome: The characters do and the dice dictate. I only suggest, hint, and supply stage props and a breathable atmosphere. I guess I just build the roads that the characters choose to follow.

Background: I let the random encounter generators create a general guideline for my campaign and fill out the details through character actions, desires, and needs [A former player even created a computer program compatable with my encounter tables]. Last spring, a group of intrepid adventurers ended up in Faerie and involved in a quest that an entirely different set of characters and players had begun in 1986. They had to toss four adamantine daggers, each enchanted with a time stopping Rune magic, through what appeared to be a tapestry but is actually part of the daggers. When the daggers are driven into the four corners of the tapestry, any interplanar gates in the vicinity are held in place. A Fallen Angel (egad!) had managed to gather all but one dagger and was attempting to stop two gates as they passed one another, in effect, creating a direct and permanant path from Hell to Middle-Earth. That would be bad (at least from the point of view of all but the denizens of Hell). Eventually, the party journeyed to the location of the tapestry, managed to dislodge the other three daggers, and tossed all four through the tapestry. The dual gate was destroyed, and everything within twelve meters was sucked into a random plane. The party managed to end up in Middle-Earth and over central Sweden, where they plopped gently into a snow bank. We'll ignore the fact that they had almost screwed up the entire quest at the last second (literally).

They then journeyed east to Uppsala, where they helped remove a wyrm from beneath the new cathedral's foundations and where they fought facsimile editions of Grendel and his mother. One person lost a hand, and another lost an entire arm, but they were alive. They went to Stockholm to look for someone with the power to restore lost limbs (to people, not shrubs). Sadly, they had no luck, except that an old witch woman named Bertha told them she thought a necromancer lived at Visby on the Isle of Gotland.

Much of the party was eager to get back to Rome (their point of origin) where they had large sums of money safely banked; the quest had not been exactly profitable, but saving the world seldom is, which is why most characters only do it once in a lifetime. Gotland was on the sailing route home, so they went.

At Visby, they discovered where they needed to go and gained entrance to a large country estate. They were well entertained, and a bargain was struck with the master of the house: The recipients of the restoration process would perform an as yet unnamed task as remuneration. They accepted, but the Knight of the Temple had second thoughts, for the master of the house seemed a bit unwholesome. So feigning weariness, he went to his bed. There he magically healed himself (although unhurt) until he drained his own lifeforce, and he died. His friends found him resting comfortably in bed, and only later discovered something was amiss. They quickly blamed the master of the house, who denied any wrong doing. To prove his innocence, he offered to call on the spirit of the dead knight and question him. Then all were satisfied (except that one player had no character).

The party decided to stick to the bargain, and in the morning, they learned its nature. They were to travel to the ruins of ancient Babylon and there recover what scrolls/tablets they could and return them to the master. He would pay their passage and traveling expenses; their equipment upkeep and such was their own, as was any booty gathered along the way. To assure that they kept to their task, he would send his daughter Rachael with them (and a new character was worked in). She would bear the checks which would cover the expense.

So they sailed southeast to the mouth of the Neman river and passed upstream by the towns of Tilsit, Kovno, and Grodno. Somewhere along here, they were attacked at night by pirates. When a female pirate tried to kill Bhedhi before she fully awoke, Bhedhi showed Matsuda how to imbed an axe in a woman's breastbone.

Rachael helped Sir AEthelstan Arnvidsson, Knight Hospitaller (AJ Hoge's character), get armored, then she began casting Paralysis on pirates in the heat of combat. The eventually armored Hospitaller made a risky and frightening leap to the attacking ship and chopped those bad men to niblets before they could say, "Yo!" At one point, an archer was taking aim at AEthelstan, and the knight paused in his fighting, pointed at the man, and yelled, "Your dead!" The stunned man fumbled, fell down, and twisted his ankle.

Matsuda got a bit frisky about one captured pirate's lack of honor, and filled him full of arrows. I guess he didn't know that this young Arabian lad was supposed to be a translator. So it goes in the world of men...

The party then journeyed overland, north from Grodno to Vilna and then east to Borisov. There they took passage on a barge heading south on the Berezina to the Dnieper. The Dnieper sail was marked by only minor events, so they reached the Black Sea and the port of Odessa. There they caught an ocean going merchant heading east to Trebizond, the last Christian kingdom they would see. Halfway across the sea, they were accosted by what looked like a skinless centaur that rose from the water. Matsuda bought a small cucumber and a pearl necklace from it.

Once in Trebizond, they headed south to the Satala Ruins and into the Sultanate of Iconium. Somewhere in the Turkish highlands the final party was established.

NOTE 1: Although no characters had handed in their spoons for quite some time, two of my players moved to Montana and A.J. had vanished into the summer job wilderness. In real time it was mid October, 1990; the events above began last January. We didn't play at all July-September. In game time, it was late September, 1211 A.D.

NOTE 2: People,...I see why your adventure summaries are so long, even with half the details left out! Anyway, here's who's going to Babylon:

Ambrose, a Greek, is primarily a spell caster. He is cautious most of the time, and occasionally reckless. He also thinks too much. He is not with the party at this point in the narrative; he went his own way at Trebizond. He wanted to see the Holy Land while he was passing this close. He rejoins them at Al Kifl, the town closest to the ruins of Babylon. Besides, Rick couldn't play for a while.

Matsuda is a Japanese holy man/mystic of some sort. I have trouble with his anme at times and often refer to him as Testudo or Menudo. He is a reserved and unassuming personality, as befits his discipline. However, he occasionally slips into common human blood-lust; he always convinces himself he has some good reason, but I know better. He is also noted for his fondness for seafood and the fish-like aroma of his farts. Fortunately, he is a fastidious bather.

Rachael is the daughter of a Persian necromancer who lives on Gotland; her mother is deceased. Ohhh...what we could do with that. Rachael is an aspiring necromancer herself. She is neither attractive nor ugly, and she has all the healthy appetites of a young woman. She is prudent, calculating, and cold in her dealings with all but her companions. She is one frightening woman. This character is the best example I have ever seen of a male running a female persona. Chris Milner, who's been playing in my campaigns since 1978, runs her.

Bhedhi (Betty), a woman of Turkish descent, is a beautiful, axe-wielding, hard-punching, warrior bitch. That's it. She swings the axe and follows that with a punch. She is as crass as she is attractive, and she has to really bite her tongue in the Moslem world. Unfortunately, she is one of the few in the party who can speak with the locals directly. Mary Ann "Mert" Marsh plays this one.

Dog the Mongol is also run by Chris. Dog is a tough little spud who likes combat, especially running down his enemies from horseback and plugging them full of arrows. What a Mongol! Like Matsuda, he stinks, only far worse. Dog only bathes if he gets rained on or falls in a river; he is a friend of flies everywhere. Nobody really likes him, but he's useful.

One night in the Turkish highlands, the party awoke to their camp being overrun by a massive herd of deer. Dog was on watch and noticed the cause was a hairy, orange man pursuing the hapless herbivores. Being a nice Mongol, Dog put an arrow through a deer's head. The ape-like man claimed the deer and began rending it and enjoying a meal. After an intense exchange of hand signals and other body language, the fuzz ball became fixated on Bhedhi, and the final member of the party was assimilated.

He is Oaudai, who I call Oldavai, a Yeti who wandered from the Tibetan Himalayas into Asia Minor. Somewhere along the way he learned rudimentary Persian, and thus can speak with a few of the other characters. He also speaks an unknown gimberish. The most recognizable term he employs is "ishkabibil." This word indicates excitement, and the speed of repetition indicates the level of that feeling. He babbles "Ishkabibil" at a rapid pace when he rends fallen foes after a fight. Gilbert plays him, too.

I'll stop here before the music begins. One final note, in a historical campaign with a culturally diverse party, language presents a most amusing obstacle. Lack of a common tongue forces characters to communicate through one another, and creates a natural rotation in which party member will deal with the local population. It's had interesting repercussions in the heat of an unfriendly encounter. With that, we go to installment five of...

THE ANONYMOUS FRESHMAN

"Learning a foreign language is bad because many students have trouble with their first language."

"He needs to have his hair cumbed and teeth brushed for an interview."

"The flinstons were my favorite cartoon."

"I prefer comedy movies because they are funny."

"I like to watch horror movies for the surprise. When the pitcure is not what they expect, the people talk amongest each other and distrub me. I prefer when the theatre is quite."

"Huge mosters that destroy cities offer little hope for survival."
-comment on monster movies

"A good college student is dependable in class attendance, allocates his time sensably, is neat and clean in personal attire, and he is young. A good students are nearly always this way."

"Education broadens the mine."

"The victims in gore films are usually bright young people, much like the people who view these films, who are murdered for no reason."

"Horror films are geared to make one think. An act that is done for no reason turns the average person into an inquizitive person."

"We as human beings enjoy most about life the younger years. I am still quiet young. Older people ar using oil of ola to stop wrinkles."

"Death is an issue we all try and put off. Wrinkles, weight-gain, and death are three substances that bring on more intensity."

"Children who have missed behaved need to be punished."

"Abuse of substances can, like amoistion, cause student to fall into a state of depression, which can lead to: death."

"The mean point In A Interview is the first impression. When the Interview starts just Rexls and be our self. The person will look you over from head to tosses."

"Music videos are interesting because they are entertaining."

"Music videos are entertaining because they are interesting."

"I have experienced a time when joy made me cry. I made cry by not doing some of things that I should have done a certain person."

"This movie had non-stop action, and with it's wonderful special affects I could not unglue my eyes from the screen."

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Deena got me interested in Motive, explaining that it was dedicated to two purposes: to improve the gaming and writing skills of its contributors by practice, the dissemination of ideas, and the review of one's peers. With that in mind, here is my first submission to Motive.

My campaign is based in J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth, and uses the (usually) excellent material published by Iron Crown Enterprises (ICE). The game system is the Rolemaster series, also published by ICE. I will presume that the reader is familiar with The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit, but that they are not scholars of Tolkien's works.

Cold War in Arthedain

I. Historical Background.

The dunedain descended from the men who first aided the elves in the ancient wars in lost Beleriand. Because of this, they have a socially and technologically advanced culture able to dominate other less advanced peoples. One realm that they founded in middle earth was called Arnor, a sister kingdom to Gondor. One of its kings divided the realm into three parts, one for each of his sons. The three kingdoms became Arthedain, Cardolan and Rhudaur. The realms often joined in common cause against their mutual enemies, but just as often fought one another on one pretext or another. The year is now 1404 in the Third Age (the War of the Ring was fought in 3019 of the Third Age), and Arthedain and Cardolan are under continuous pressure from the realm of Angmar. (Rhudaur collapsed some years ago, under assaults from dissatisfied members within, and the armies of Angmar from without.) Angmar is led by the infamous Witch-King, one of the undead Nazgûl in Sauron's service. It is not strong enough to militarily destroy the two realms just yet, so the war has taken on another aspect. Angmar is attempting to manipulate the governments by placing agents in key positions in the government, to diminish the resolve of the dunedain to continue to fight, and to weaken the frontier defenses so that a strategic defeat of the dunedain becomes possible.

The eastern border of Arthedain, lying along the weather hills is the main frontier with Angmar. At the southern end of the weather hills is the hilltop fortress of Amon Sûl, the Hill of the Wind. (In later years, the ruins of this fortress and its hill will be known as Weathertop.) This bastion is a key to the defense of the frontier. Geographically, it acts as hinge, the rest of the line is based upon it. In addition, it is on the border between Arthedain and Cardolan and jointly garrisoned by both of them. Its loss would allow Angmar to drive a wedge between the two realms. Magically, it houses the most important of the Palantir (seeing stones) of the northern realms of the dunedain. It is a site of great cultural importance. It was built by the founder of the realm upon a site hallowed by the dunedain's ancestors of old. Its loss would demoralize the realms and make conquest easier.

Our adventure starts in the shadow of Amon Sûl...

II. Raid on Laurëmar.

Amon Sûl (Weathertop) in Arthedain/Cardolan, Third Age 1404.

The adventurers are relaxing in one of the taverns outside of the fortress of Amon Sûl. If they are like most adventurers, they are about as conspicuous as an orc at the Prince's Ball. A young Arthedain lieutenant enters the tavern, looks around, and asks the party if he can buy a round of drinks for them. He introduces himself as Galdor, and wants to know if the party would be interested in employment for a rather interesting mission. In any case, he will ask them to swear to secrecy before continuing. He seems an honest enough lad, unused to such dealings.

Assuming the party is interested, he will explain:

> "I am a soldier of the King. My lord Captain and I are escorts to one of the King's ministers. We are conducting a tour of the fortifications along the weather hills north of here. Here is our problem: Barad Laurëmar, a day's ride north of here, is commanded by the youngest son of one of the noble families of Arthedain, and was chosen for his birth rather than his abilities. This would be acceptable if he did a competent job, but he doesn't. His garrison is sloppy, ill-disciplined, and poorly prepared for war. In short, my Captain and I feel that the keep is in danger. But, the minister is afraid to reprimand the Lord of the keep without overwhelming proof of malfeasance - because of the Lord's family connections. What does he want, anyway? The keep razed!
>
> Well, what we want is to prove how poorly run the garrison is. My job is to hire the first (insert number of party here) people I can find to infiltrate the keep! Naturally, you can't hurt anyone when you are doing this, and we can't tell the garrison about it either. Your job is to capture, unharmed, the Lord of the keep and then announce your presence to the King's minister. Are you interested?"

He will pay, upon completion, up to 20 gold pieces per person, up to a maximum of 100 gold coins. He will explain that he can not give out any information concerning the keep at all, as the point will only be made if the party can accomplish it's mission with absolutely no inside information. Should the party ask what will happen if they are caught, he will openly acknowledge that he and the Captain will disavow all knowledge of the party. But if they haven't hurt anyone, and don't spill the beans, he can arrange an escape. Should one of the party be killed, the Captain will deliver the deceased member's share to an address of their choice. If the party agrees, the lieutenant will tell them that they must attack tomorrow night, as the minister is likely to leave the following morning.

All is exactly as it appears, except...

1. The keep will be assaulted tonight by an elite force of Angmar's troops. The Lord of the keep, the royal minister, and the captain as well as much of the garrison will be taken prisoner. The elite force will withdraw, and will be replaced by the worst garrison troops that Angmar can muster. These troops will wear the uniforms of Arthedain so that outsiders will not know that the keep has fallen. The new 'garrison' troops will have access to all the liquor stores in the keep, and being undisciplined, will get themselves drunk. The first keg will be drugged by the outgoing elite force commander as a precaution, so unless the party really works at it they should be able to infiltrate successfully. (The troops will appear to be roaring drunk. Ham it up, and really complain about the guard's perception rolls.) Hopefully, the party will notice that all is not as it seems before waking up everyone to announce the capture of the Lord of the Keep...

2. If the adventurers succeed in recapturing the keep, they will be given a rousing cheer by the Royal minister and the Captain. They will be paid in full for their endeavors, and the minister will double the payment as a reward. The captain is now a hero and will be placed in charge of the keep, and the prior lord of the keep will leave in disgrace. The adventurers will earn the undying hate of the House of Tarma for disgracing their son.

3. Unknown to anyone else in the keep, the Captain is an agent of Angmar. New soldiers must be recruited to fill the gaps in the ranks. The Captain will, over the next few years, replace much of the current garrison with men loyal to Angmar. He will be able to store siege engines and equipment only a day's ride from Amon Sûl (instead of weeks away in the Witch-king's nearest fortress). This will make possible a surprise attack on Amon Sûl with full assault gear, as the court seers usually focus their palantir to the east into Angmar's territory, not into their own keeps! (Historically, Amon Sûl fell to Angmar in T.A. 1409 in a surprise assault. Cardolan's army was surprised by the host of the Witch-king well behind the line of forts, and destroyed on the field of battle. This scenario sets the stage for these events.)

4. Incidentally, the Captain will want the adventurers killed off later, as he doesn't want 'loose ends'. The adventurers may have seen something that would give the show away under expert questioning. This is why the lieutenant was instructed to get an address to send funds to if a party member was killed, and why the Captain, in the rush of events after the rescue of the keep, will ask the party how he can get in touch with them for more assignments.

5. The captain has a backup plan to rescue the keep. He has hidden a key to the brig in his boot, so he can 'escape' with the tower troops and retake the tower if he needs to. He would prefer to have the adventurers do the rescue, as they are outsiders who make it much harder for the Royal Minister to 'hush up' the scandal. Angmar wants a rift between the King of Arthedain and the powerful noble House of Tarma. In addition, he wouldn't have to explain how he got a key to the brig in the first place.

III. Philosophy of Gaming.

The adventure, Raid on Laurëmar, highlights my philosophy about what a referee's duty is. All too often (in fact almost always!), players seem to think that it is their duty to sit around somewhere and wait for the referee to bring them an adventure. Well, I will bring them one, but they are unlikely to find it profitable. Why? Lets face it, other people in the world don't spend time thinking up how they can benefit the next (insert number of party here) people that walk through the door and order a beer! They spend time thinking about how they can benefit themselves. So, almost any adventure that I provide to a group of lazy players hanging around the local drinking establishment is not likely to be tailored to benefit the players. Someone else will get the real reward and the adventurers are likely to get the dregs. Why should your average person care about what happens to bunch of drunken, kinless drifters?

I personally believe that it is the experienced character's duty to design many of the adventures that he/she undertakes. The character should provide the goal, explain the motivation to attempt the goal, detail how they will research the subject, and formulate a plan of attack. This might not be more than, "I need to find some work, I will ask around town to see if there are any positions open for an experienced swordsman. I will check first with the guards at the gate, then at the merchant's guildhall. If I don't have any luck, I'll go spend my last coins in the local tavern and check there." Of course, a clever player might have checked out whether there was likely to be any work before he travelled to the location in the first place!

It is the referee's duty to provide the adventure within the framework of the world that the characters reside in. If the goal is impossible, but the player did not determine that from his research, how unfortunate for the player. If the goal is attainable, and the plan and characters undertaking it are appropriate, then the players may well succeed despite unforeseen obstacles and the mishaps of fate. They are certainly much less likely to be the pawns of someone else.

One other aspect of gaming that Raid on Laurëmar brings out is the concept of continuity. All too often I have noticed that players conclude an adventure, and then completely forget about it when they move on to the next session of play. In the above adventure, three separate groups may want to 'look up' the players. The forces of Angmar want no 'loose ends' left hanging about. And, the captain's enemies at court (or members of the King's spy service) may suspect that the whole incident was less than aboveboard. They would also want to question the Captain's 'accomplices.' The House of Tarma may want to revenge their disgrace. Woe unto the players if they forget who they have humiliated and wander onto House Tarma land!

V. Mailing Comments

Doing specific mailing comments on three issues of Motive is rather more than I can handle at once, so I will touch on several topics. Greetings to my old friends (who know oh-too-well that I never, ever lack an opinion on anything) and greetings to those of you I haven't met. I hope that we will become friends as well!

Immature Gamers, and Society's Lack of Respect for Gamers

I also have been guilty of some of the actions listed and have had to suffer through situations fundamentally similar. Frankly, I don't think we will ever escape the problem until newcomers quit joining our ranks (which is when we will start writing articles bemoaning the lack of gamers!). Many of us play to scratch that creative itch, but many also play to 'escape' the mundane world's petty aspects. Most of the problem gamers fall into the later category. As long as gaming offers that escape, the people who can't 'make it' in the real world will be gaming with us. Since many who can't adjust to the real world lack self-esteem or basic social skills, the ranks of gamers will always have a larger percentage of people with these problems. The general public is more likely to notice that portion of gamers (because the rest of us are more discreet), we will always have a bad image. I'm not trying to say that we can't do something about it, because we can. But if I like to play in a cow pasture, I don't complain when I stumble into evidence that cows are near!

I liked some of the suggestions given for getting a group of players back on track and found the 'situations' illustrated to be well chosen. But other situations come to mind. For instance, the biggest problem that I think most players have is a lack of goals for the future. They do not appear to think (which might actually be problem number one) that they are responsible for their own destiny. They have no specific goals, thus make no plans, thus never move forward in real or character life. In a party full of sheep, the player who knows what he wants to do will dominate the show. (And I definitely don't, don't, don't want to know what Sersus would do with a party of sheep!) Seriously, what should a player do when the only skill his fellow party members have is to disguise themselves to look like the proverbial bumps on a log? If he takes charge, he is a 'game-hog', and if he doesn't, nothing gets done and everyone's time is wasted.

Simple vs. Complex Game Systems.

I don't really care because I don't find most role-playing systems that complex. I've been wargaming since the 4th grade, and compared to many of my wargames, almost all role-playing systems are simple. I wouldn't start a new wargamer out with a super-complex wargame, and I wouldn't make a new roleplayer worry about learning any game system until after they had played a character. I agree with those of you who mentioned that a game with no rules but common sense can be fun, and I prefer to bring in brand new players that way. I suggest using the regular game system with the older players, and allow the new player to use the common sense rules at the same time.

What I do care about, however, is the flexibility of the game system. In other words, can I role-play real people in a realistic manner using the system? I abhor the 'class' systems in AD&D, as 'real people' just don't fit into cookie-cutter class molds. The alignment system from AD&D is, in my not-so-humble opinion, a pathetic bastardization of Law and Chaos as found in the series on Elric the Melnibonean. Not only do 'real people' not fit into the alignment system, the system makes little sense as is.

I currently play with the RoleMaster rules. I've noticed that many of you seem to dislike this system intensely. Two basic reasons have been given: too complex and it takes too long to role up a character. First of all, I don't worry about whether the precise defensive bonus given to an archer behind a wall is +50 or +75 in the RoleMaster charts. Frankly, having reviewed the charts in the dim past to get a 'feel' for what a reasonable bonus should be, I make up a bonus on the spot. Any differences from one time to another can be explained by the fact that one archer might make better use of cover, whereas the other might get excited and expose himself (sorry Deena!).

On taking too long to role up a character, I agree if either of the following reasons apply: (1) you are introducing a new, inexperienced player into the game (or a visiting friend who wouldn't normally stay in your campaign) or (2) your characters die so frequently that rolling up new ones is a major chore. I can 'make up' a character in 3 minutes for situation one (or have ready-to-go characters already 'properly' worked up). If they stay in the campaign, you can work up a new character or let them keep the 'old' one. As for the second point, if your characters die too often, it's not the system that is the problem.....

One reason that I like the Rolemaster system is the approach taken for skills. Any profession can learn any skill, it just costs more to learn a skill outside of the normal range for your profession. Actually, one of my favorite game systems is Chivalry & Sorcery. It has enormous flexibility, and is detailed enough to be played on many levels - personal adventuring, social, economic, political, and militarily. (I do find this one complex!) The magic system is fantastic. In many games, one magic user is just like another. C&S has many, very different magicians, each of whom not only specializes in dissimilar spell types, but the mechanism for casting spells varies by the type of the mage. For example, the Enchanter is a magician who uses song and sound to work his magic. Primitive Shaman must actually go into a trance and commune with their totem to cast magic. Others work their magic with the written word, or only through potions. The variety is amazing. In addition, there are no fireball or waterwall spells. Instead, magicians work with elemental magic spells, and must combine them to create the desired effect. For example, to duplicate a typical AD&D fireball, the following spells must be cast: (Round 1) Create Fire (in a ball shape), Intensify Heat, Move Fire, (Round 2) Accelerate Fire (to make it move fast). If the fire were already present in sufficient quantity, the caster could have skipped the Create Fire spell. Another example: (Round 1) Create Water (in a cylindrical shape extending from a specified point), Create Heat, Intensify Heat, (Round 2) Move Water, Accelerate Water for a steam-blasting waterbolt. As you can see, the magician of elemental magic has tremendous flexibility, but he must know the tools of his trade to survive.

Does a game system matter for the genre being role-played?

I'll agree that C&S is inappropriate for a 'beer & pretzels' game. But beyond that, I'm not so sure. For example, the original C&S rules were written with a medieval European setting illustrated in the rulebook. A lot of the 'rules' in the book were actually background for this milieu. They did such a good job of meshing the rules with the background that players assumed that C&S could only work in medieval Europe. To prove them wrong, several modules were published - including background rules for Mongols, Celts, Norse, Japanese and an imaginary Saurian world with intelligent creatures descended from dinosaurs! In each case, if you were unaware of the other modules, you would have assumed that the rules were written exclusively for that, and only that, society.

Should magic and the world be 'realistic'?

Damn straight it should! Ah, but what do we mean by realistic...

How about rational, consistent, and with its own framework of rules, which do not conflict with the physical laws of the universe portrayed. I dislike the arbitrary use of 'because' in all real life situations and I sure don't like to put up with it in my hobbies. The world should 'fit together' so that someone who is playing in it can get a feel for how things 'should be' and play their character accordingly. That's one reason that I base my campaign in Tolkien's Middle Earth. I lack the time (and perhaps the creative vision) to make up one of my own, but I can grasp the essentials of his world and graft my own smaller settings onto his. Because his world is so well crafted, one can 'get inside it' and play characters in his world. Characters can plan because they can understand the world around them, it is not arbitrary in definition. In Middle Earth, I have no trouble believing in elves, dwarves, dragons, and even the preposterous hobbits.

True Confessions

If you were to ask me to play in a post-holocaust campaign or a campaign based upon a current day setting, in which some people had super powers due to mutations, genetic engineering, knowledge of ancient magic, or even freak chemical or radiation accidents, I would say, "Great!"

But, if you were to ask me to play in a comic-book style superhero game, I'd say, "Thanks, but I can't play tonight." but I'd think "Hell no! Who would want to waste their time playing that crap!"

The background is technically the same, but to me there is a great difference. I am unable to suspend my disbelief when it comes to Comic book superhero campaigns, but I don't know why. (Maybe it is the character names, or the funny costumes, or just a lack of respect for the comic book genre.) I'll try to keep an open mind, and hope that you'll accept a difficult challenge and try to convince me otherwise.

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Relics of Middle-earth

Luindäe (Quenya "Blue Shadow")

+25 Blue Laen Two-Handed Sword

Description:

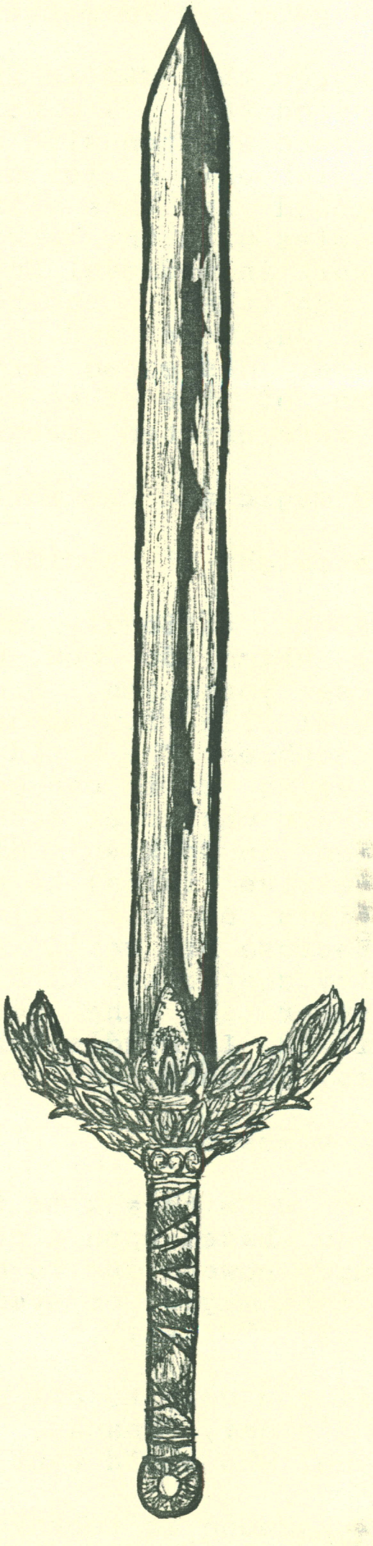
A blade of blue laen (an enchanted volcanic glass-like substance), near the hilt is a mithril plate, inscribed in ithildin, stating "I am Luindäe sword of Voronwë Astaldo, made in Ondolindë by Amdir Telpefin, Lord Smith of Ondolindë." The hilt guard is made of mithril and blue laen in the shape of mithril veined blue laen leaves. The grip is wrapped in white silk, and the pommel is a clear laen gem. Within the gem is an ithildin moon surrounded by a smoky mist. (Ithildin glows under natural moonlight.)

Abilities:

.Teleports to hand from 500' away.
.Gives Holy Criticals.
.Of Slaying vs. evil creatures.
.Cannot be fumbled by a member of the House of Fingolfin.
.Transforms into a dagger at will. The dagger has a plain appearance.
.50% of normal encumbrance wt.

History:

Forged for the Goblin Wars in ancient Gondolin, Luindäe was a potent weapon for the House of Fingolfin, the royal house of the High Kings of the Noldor Elves.



Stuff from Brad & Rick

Brad Townsend/Rick Moody
Athens, GA

I'm not sure how to start this. Wayne called me a week ago and asked me if I wanted to join the Motive crowd. He had asked me if I wanted to join originally, but at the time I kind of procrastinated and just never got around to it. Now, four issues later, he asked again. There were only a few membership slots open, and when he asked me this time, well I guess I just got a wild hair or something and I decided to risk all and say yes. I had all these neat idea's about stuff that I wanted to write about, but now I can't decide on which one. And, like Darrell, I have no idea what to call this article. By the way, Rick will be joining with me, but he will probably be submitting stuff on an irregular basis.

I've been gaming for about 11 years. I, as most people, started out playing AD&D. Later in life, I learned that other game systems existed, and I began the search for the ultimate game system. Of course, I still haven't found it yet. During this search I have come across a few game systems that I would consider "really good". I have also come across some that are "really bad". It's probably just a cooincidence that some of the best and the worst games I have been in coincided with the "really good" and the "really bad" game systems.

I have a hard time putting down game systems in general. They all serve some purpose (at least most do). And the one thing about any published game system that can be said is that some gamer or gamers at least tried their best to put together a game system for the benefit of other gamers. I can't say this for myself. Since I haven't made the effort to publish what I would consider the "ultimate game system", I have a hard time putting down those who have at least made the effort. If you don't like it, don't use it. But just because you don't like it, don't force your viewpoint on the gaming world by putting down those who do like it and use it. I can't believe that any gamer or group of gamers would spend the time to put together an intentionally bad game system. (Well.... on the other hand....) Of course, I suppose that any game system created would reflect directly on those who created it, and if the said gamers were a bunch of rules raping puberty-drones, then the said game system would tend to at least partially reflect their style of gaming. But that has never happened, has it?

Anyway, let me share my thoughts in general about a few of my favorite game systems, as well as a few of my favorite games. I will probably be blasted for this, but every Tuesday night I run a Rolemaster game. This particular campaign has been running for a few years now, and I hope that everybody playing in it has had a good time. I like Rolemaster, and I have even included (later in this article) my own customized rules for character generation in my campaign. Rolemaster was the first game system I learned after AD&D. At the time Rolemaster seemed like a revelation of some kind after AD&D. (Talk about going from one extreme to another...) Like Jon Hanna said in an earlier Motive article, I have come to enjoy any well run game regardless of the game system being used. I still enjoy AD&D, and in fact, I think the best run AD&D game I have ever had the pleasure of playing in was run by AJ Hodge, a fellow Motive member. My first real experience in a long running campaign was in a Rolemaster group in Atlanta. Linden, a Healer, was the name of my character (some of you have heard me talk about him) in that campaign, and I played him for almost 5 years.

About the time that the Rolemaster campaign was beginning to break up, I was exposed to Champions. Up until this time I had never done any Super-Hero Role Playing. I used to collect comics and such, but before Champions I had never considered the possibility of role playing comic book characters. My Champions experience has been extremely varied. I have played under so many GM's and under so many rules variations, that sometimes I have a hard time remembering what is what. But things have smoothed out a good bit, especially with the arrival of Deena, Kieth, and Wayne onto the Athens scene. Our Champions campaign (that is me, Jon Monk, Jon Hanna and the last vestige of what we called the Active Point Campaign) took a major turn with the arrival of those three, and I think we have all had a great deal of fun in the past couple of years since they have shown up.

Deena's MERP game has been a real pleasure to play in. I really look forward to her game on Thursday nights. She has told me the game will be coming to a close rather soon, and I am sorry to hear that. Loren, a sage of Minis Tirith will be forced into early retirement. I love playing in Middle Earth. Oh well.....

RuneQuest III , or more precisely Wayne's Edge game, is another of my all-time favorites. Vish, my Mantis Warrior, and long time travelling companion to the well known Sersus the Monkey Man, will soon be adding comments of his own in Motive. Don't worry, I'll make sure that everyone gets the "real" dirt on the monkey man, not this light-hearted, edited crap he's been handing everybody.

Another of my favorite games is the "Norse" campaign, also run by Wayne. The "Norse" campaign uses the Champions game system, but the setting Wayne uses is unique. It is sort of a modern day Fantasy Hero set in athens, after Ragnarok has taken place. My character's name is Fabian, and he is an Athen's trendy art student in graduate school who can bring most anything he paints or draws into reality. The first part of this campaign was great fun, and I can't wait for further adventures.... (hint, hint Wayne).

There are quite a few other game systems I have used - Star Wars, and Call of Cthulu to name a few. There are still a number of game systems which I haven't mentioned, but the ones that I have covered are pretty much my favorites. I know I missed the Motive issue where game systems - simple vs. complex - were discussed, so I won't go into my thoughts on that subject here. Besides, that is an article unto itself, and I should save it for later to add to my indecisiveness about topics.

Well, Jon Hanna brought over all the Motive issues to date for me to read. I flipped through them all, but I still haven't read them through in detail, so I'll refrain from making any comments about anybody's writings to date. I guess that's about it for now. I suppose I'll have to start soon on next issue's article and decide what to put in.

Should it be short stories from character viewpoints, articles on the characters themselves, comments from the characters, scenario/campaign ideas (the way I intended them to run vs. the way they did run), more general BS about gaming like this article, ... who knows ...

First of all, let me offer my views on the Rolemaster game system. I like Rolemaster. I'm sorry, I don't know why, but I do. I will admit that Rolemaster is one of the more complicated game systems around, especially as far as character generation goes, but I think that the system as a whole offers a lot for both the GM and the player. And once the pain of generating the character is over, there is really very little for the player to worry about. The initial process of creating a character (first level) should take about 2-3 hours, and it should only take about 20 minutes of updating every time a character gains a level of experience. The time involved lessens considerably when both the player and the GM are familiar with the game system.

I have both seen and experienced bad Rolemaster games, and , as with any game system, a bad GM can kill the fun for any and all involved. The complexity of Rolemaster is something that both a player and a GM can easily get wrapped up in. And, I must admit, I used to let that happen to me (I'm not saying it still doesn't happen, but now I do try to safeguard against it). After being exposed to other game systems such as RuneQuest and Fantasy Hero, I realized that Rolemaster is not really all that complicated - it's just different. After having played many game systems over the last 10 years, I could blast each and every one for some flaw or another. All game systems have strong points and weak points in the way they are put together and the way they operate. Rolemaster fits in with all the rest, and it might even have a few more weak spots than most, but it also has some very strong points in its structure which make it the game of my choice for FRP. However much I like Rolemaster, it is not the only game system I play or GM. I also happen to like RuneQuest and the Hero System (both Champions and Fantasy Hero).

I feel that I need to make one more statement on gaming as a whole, and then I will get on to the point of this article. Any gamer will eventually learn this, but I think that it took me longer than most. I finally learned that the rules for any game system are optional. They are guidlines - nothing more. You can take what you want and throw the rest away. Any GM has the power to pick and choose only those things he or she wants to include. Believe it or not this was a great revelation to me! In my early days as a young GM, it never dawned on me that the rules of the system I was running were not etched in stone. It is a GM's responsibility to make sure that his players have fun. It is not the funciton of a game to leave a player more stressed out after the game than before. If there are some really stupid rules in the game system, throw them out! Change them to suit your game - even have a group discussion with your players and ask their opinoin. Just don't be stubborn and cause dissention among the ranks. (I am beginning to wander here...... I could write a lot more my views of gaming in general, but that is another article..... let's get back to the one at hand...)

As I said above, Rolemaster is a complicated game system. I also said that I like the game system. Both these statements are true. One of the reasons I like the game system so much is its thoroughness. After a player finishes generating his or her character, he or she knows precisely what that character is capable of doing, even down to the smallest detail. That same thoroughness is present when generating new skills, spells, magic items, etc... If anything is added to the game system using the parameters of the game system, then there should be little or no question concerning the new addition.

It just so happens that I have come up with my own version of generating a character for Rolemaster. I have tried to simplify the system somewhat and make it much more generic. I did this primarily for purposes in my campaign. I know I said that this is a simplified version, but in many ways it results in more paperwork for the player. But the end result is that the player knows the character inside and out, and is, I think, much more satisfied with the finished character because the character is tailored specifically to the desires of the player. (With GM approval of course!)

The first thing I did was throw away all the character classes. Now, a character is either a Spell User or a Non-Spell User. I use the Non-Profession class in the game system as a basis for all starting characters. It made sense to me that everyone would start out with roughly the same abilities. Then, to indicate natural abilities in a certain realm or area, such as magic or arms, the player gets to reduce his or her skill costs in desired areas using a set number of points derived from their primary stats. By changing the character generation in this manner, it only increased what I saw as one of Rolemaster's primary strengths as a game system, which was that any character can do anything. There are no silly restrictions placed on magic users about learning swordcraft or fighters learning spells - any character can learn anything he or she desires to learn within the parameters of the GM's world setting. Now, on to the gory details.....

An Alternative Character Generation System for Rolemaster

As always, the first step in character creation is the character concept. It is extremely important that the character be well thought out before going any further, otherwise the finished character will end up as ambiguous as the players concept. At this point, if the player is still unsure of what he or she wants, you might go ahead and work on some background options to help get things moving.

Go ahead and roll the stats normally and determine the potentals. The two primary stats are chosen either by the GM or the player, or better yet by both after discussing the type of character this is going to be. I normally use the rule about changing the two primary stats to 90, so this can be done to whichever two stats are decided upon. For Spell Users take the two primary stats, divide them by ten, add them together and multiply by two (((Primary1/10) + (Primary2/10)) x 2). Do the same for Non-Spell Users except multiply by three (((Primary1/10) + (Primary2/10)) x 3). Round off the resulting number, and that figure is how many points you will have to buy down the skill costs for this character. Let's call that figure your Characteristic Points (or CP's for short).

Use the Non-Profession skill costs for all characters (except the skill costs for spell development - that will come later). You can lower the skill cost for any skill by spending one point of your CP's for each point you want to lower the skill cost by. Now here's the catch - you can't buy down only the first part of a skill - if you buy down the first rank of the skill cost, you have to buy down the second rank of the skill cost before you can buy down the first rank again. Example: by spending one CP you can take a skill costing 3/6 down to 2/6. But you have to spend another CP to take it down to 2/5 before you can take it down any further (in this case to 1/5). In my game I don't allow any skill costs to be bought down below half its original value rounded up, so a 3/6 could never be bought lower than a 2/3 (Some GM's might allow rounding down instead of up, but I think that would make the skill costs to low). If you are buying a skill cost down, and you buy the first rank down to its limit before the second rank, you can continue to buy down the second rank to its limit. For example: you spend 1 CP and lower a 3/6 to a 2/6. You spend another CP and make it a 2/5. If you are opting to round up, then the 2 can't be bought any lower. However, you can continue to spend 2 more CP's to lower the 5 to a 3. You have now spent a total of 4 CP's to buy a skill costing 3/6 down to 2/3.

One option I use, although not many people choose to take advantage of it, is to spend 5 CP's and open up a third rank on a skill. This is done by making the third rank the cost of the first two, so a skill costing 3/6 becomes 3/6/9. The same rules apply above for buying it down, so the lowest it could be bought to would be 2/3/5 by spending 13 CP's (5 CP's to open up the third rank and 8 CP's to buy it down). This rule is used when a character wishes to be very specialized in one particular skill, and have a more rapid development period with that skill. This might sound over-balanced to some people, but you will find that your CP's go quicker than you would like, and most players find that they just don't want to spend the points.

Non-Spell Users are fairly straight forward. Spell-Users, as usual, are more complicated. Let me explain a few changes I have made in the development system where spells are concerned. First of all, since there are no more character classes, professional spell lists are converted to Closed Lists of whatever realm they happen to be in. Next, all Closed lists in a realm are converted to Open lists. Then a player can pick any six lists to use as his base lists. Even though the spells will be bought individually, the original spell pick levels still apply (an A pick is any spell of level 1-5, etc.). Use the following table to determine spell costs:

Pick	Non-Spell Users	Pure Base Lists	Pure Open/Closed	Hybrid Base Lists	Hybrid Open/Closed
A	8	-	-	-	4
B	-	2	2	2	-
C	16	-	-	-	8
D	32	2	2	4	16
E	-	2	-	4	-

If you wishe to skip over a spell on a list , simply pay 1 development point for that space. The same rule would apply if there was no spell of a particular level. However, a character must pay for all the slots below the level of the spell he or she has bought. For example, you want only the 10th level spell on a list. You must first spend 9 development points for the 9 slots below the one you want, then you pay the appropriate number of points for the 10th level spell. This rule is enforced to simulate at least a elementary understanding of the formula needed to cast a spell from that list.

Well, that's mostly it. Go ahead and spend your development points, and proceed normally in the character generation process. I will include a few other options that I use for my game, but keep in mind that all of these options may not be compatable with your world.

Some Optional rules I Use

I use all 10 stats for development points.

When buying down the skill costs, if it is a skill used more than once (for instance Directed Spell), use the lowered cost each time you buy that skill. For example, you don't have to buy down Directed Spell Shock Bolt and Directed Spell FireBolt, simply buy down Directed Spell, and any Directed Spell skill you buy will be at the lower cost.

Background Options - I give each player 6 points for background options. They can spend 1 point and roll on the Special Items, Special Wealth, or Special Status tables from Character Law, or they can Spend 2 points and roll on the Skill at Magic or Skill at Arms tables in the Rolemaster Companion, or they can spend 3 points and pick a special ability from the Skill at Magic or Skill at Arms table, or they can spend 3 points and roll on the chaos table in Rolemaster Companion III, or they can spend 6 points and pick from the chaos table. All of this, of course, is subject to GM approval.

I give the player 10 points to distribute among his or her level bonus's (no more than +3 in any bonus, and only a +2 in base spell - unless the character is an archmage and then they can have a +3) (A character can become an archmage only through background options - then use the hybrid spell point cost)

That about wraps it up. Any questions or comments are welcome. You can write or call at the following address:

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This story is kind of an afterthought for this issue of Motive. I hadn't intended to put this in yet. I was hesitant about where to start the story. I actually wrote a longer piece of how Linden met these characters. My plan is to write (eventually) the entire atlanta rolemaster campaign from Linden's point of view. I will probably enter it sometime in the future - or maybe not since this is like reading the last few pages and finding out how the story ends. If anyone likes this, and would like me to continue, then I will - otherwise I will can this and try something else. Please keep in mind that I have never written for any type of publication, so this is a first for me. Let me know what you think, and don't spare my feelings.

This encounter with Dreyfus is near the end of the campaign. The characters have spent nearly thirty years hunting Dreyfus, and in turn being hunted by him. This is the first time they have actually met him face to face in his natural form. The characters discovered earlier that they have actually met him many times before, and have even worked for him - all under assumed guises. Linden started in this campaign when he was 15th level. Previously he had been an NPC in one of my campaign's. Jim (the GM) was hesitant to let me in his game for a few reasons: 1) the game had been played up to this point using AD&D (the characters ended up between 11th and 16th level in rolemaster) and I had not been a part of it and 2) this was his first attempt at rolemaster and he didn't want another high level character in his game. I convinced him for two reasons: 1) I knew rolemaster pretty well, and 2) Linden was only a healer, not an extremely powerful combat person or magic blaster and he wouldn't upset the game play much at all. (Little did he know!)

So I brought Linden in at 15th level and over the 5 years of play he eventually ended up at 28th. Dreyfus is actually a Vampire, who, when the campaign began was a 50th level Astrologer (perfect profession for a Vampire huh?). Well if we knew who and what he was we would probably have never tried to hunt him down and kill him. We all would have slit our wrists and had done with it. But Jim was a masterful GM and a great role player, and we had 5 years of a lot of fun. Jim told me that by the end of the campaign, Dreyfus was 54th level.

Anyway, here is part of the story. I hope you like it...

Dreyfus. That name unsettles me more than any other. I am a Healer. I let life energies channel through my body at will, worshipping life and all the wonders that it brings. I like to think that I am good. I mean good in a broad scope. I mean Good. Good that matters. But all that I am is threatened by that name. I have done things I would never have thought possible because of that name. Would that I had never heard it. No. I can't think that. If I had not acted when I discovered it's true nature, perhaps it would still go unchecked. Not that I can do much against It. Me or any of my companions. We have grown strong in our struggle against him, and yet he is always stronger, always smarter. I am powerful. I have warped my magics in ways I would not have dreamed of, all in the name of Light. But we never seem to be enough...

Perhaps now, with what I have learned I might have a chance against him. But at what cost to myself? Oh, Eldaril, what have I become? Is this what you planned all along? I have made myself a vessell for your Will, but I have done unspeakable acts in your name - and yet you have not forsaken me. And I must not forsake my friends.

We must rescue Florindel. I shudder in fear at what we will find. My last contact with Florindel was sundered by Dreyfus. I could hear him laughing, and Florindel screaming as he stripped the mind and will of my friend. It is times like these when I wish my magic was of the pure Essence. The magic that so easily destroys. I would use it to destroy him. I hate him all the more for making me think like this.

"Linden! Pay attention. We have to come up with a plan to free Finny."

Finny. That was the nickname we all used instead of Florindel. I realized that Cord was speaking to me.

"I'm sorry. My thoughts were wandering - thinking of Finny. I am growing weary of this struggle. Is it worth it? Is losing Florindel worth it?"

Of course I knew exactly what Cord would say. Or not say. He just looked at me. His eyes gave me his response. I looked over his shoulder to see Forest signaling us that there were guards coming.

"Cord, let me handle these. We need to keep our presence here quiet, and it will at least make me feel useful."

"Linden, we need your Healing for Finny when we find him. Don't waste your strength on petty guards. I can remove them quietly enough. Remember, I am the best." He said this last with a gleam in his eye. He was right of course. I should save my strength for Florindel. And Cord was the best unarmed fighter I have ever seen. But right now, I was so frustrated at what I knew was happening to Finny, while I sat here helpless to prevent it, that I wasn't in a mood to listen to reason.

"I will have enough strength to help Finny. Please, Cord. I feel the need to strike at something. Let me handle this my way. Just be ready to back me up. "

I reached for my herb pouch. Pulling out three small vials, I broke the wax seals and waited. I heard the guards coming. I quickly consumed all three vials of Ul-Acana. It was the deadliest poison I had access to. I could feel it starting to work already. This is for a good cause. I have to keep reminding myself of that.

I reached out with my magic and opened up a channel between their bodies and mine. As soon as I fel the poison reach my heart, I Transfered it into their bodies. Without a sound they dropped dead.

I began to cry. So this is what the great Healer has come to. Using his arts to kill. I perfected the skill of reversing the Transfer of wounds for valid medical reasons. It has saved many lives. But it has killed far more. All because of Dreyfus. This is but one atrocity I have discovered myself capable of performing. Oh, Eldaril, what have I become?

"Are you satisfied?", Cord asked.

My silence was his answer. And my tears.

Cindrix came around the corner.

"I found him. There's no sign of Dreyfus. Come on."

Finny was sitting on the floor in the middle of a large room. The room was richly furnished with a large canopy bed. It belonged to one of the Royal Advisors - or at least it had. I wonder if Dreyfus had the Advisor under control all this time, or if Dreyfus had actually taken over the mans identity.

I crouched down to look at Finny. I lifted his chin, and his eyes were totally expressionless. It would take time, but I could repair the damage. Hopefully, Dreyfus didn't know I was capable of such a feat, and had spoken of his plans before shredding FInny's mind. Maybe this was the mistake we have been waiting for...

Laughter.

I spun around, and silouetted against the balcony, a black shape was taking form. His form blotted out the stars from the window behind him.

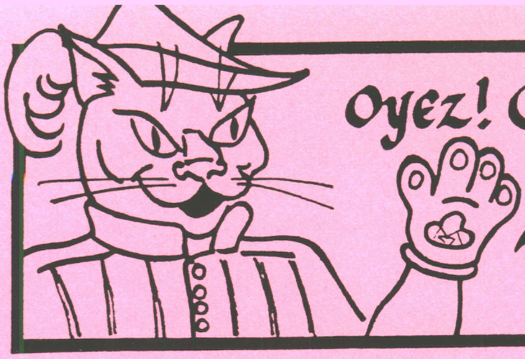
Three of my five companions fell - either unconscious or dead. Only myself, Finny, and Cord, all three under the protection of Eldaril, resisted his evil spell.

More laughter. "I knew you couldn't resist trying to rescue that pathetic thing. How appropriate that you will all die just like him. Not real death, oh no.... my kind of death..... "

This was wrong. Yet again, he caught us unaware. Cindrix had said there was no sign of him. I ached to strike out at him. Destroy him. Patience. We must be sure of his destruction. I must insure that at least one of us survives to carry on this fight. Someone has to survive.

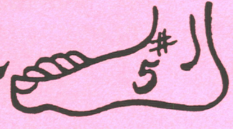
I went cold at the thought of what I was about to do. I gained the knowledge from Dreyfus himself, in a spell book of his that we discovered - one he thought destroyed - but I have never attempted to use the Power. Many wise men have warned against studying the ways of the enemy lest you become like them. I feel as though I am already half way there. What do I have to lose? Just the other half of my Soul.

I locked eyes with Dreyfus, my enemy, and began the spell....



Oyez! Gilbert Head, denizen of 170 Merlin Drive, Athens, GA 30606 presents:

The Game is a-



"The grave that they dug him had flowers,
Gathered from the hillsides in bright summer colors.
The brown earth bleached white at the edge of his gravestone—
He's gone.....
But eternity knows him, and it knows what we've done."

I know I risk being accused of bringing everyone right on down, and I also know that I risk being accused of not "keeping to the point" of gaming, but I need to get a couple of things off my chest ere we press on this outing.

My thinking on this was crystallized by news reports that Avalon Hill had rushed into production a special edition of a new wargame which casts sides in the current confrontation between Iraq and just about everybody else. I guess the capper was that a company spokeswoman said, with noticable pride, "We've even put together 200 copies of the game to send over to the guys there now, free of charge. They can play while they're waiting for the real thing."

I wonder why it is that we are so easily seduced by the prospect of killing each other? Certainly the aggressive animal side of our nature is clamoring for attention, and certainly "force of habit" is a strong motivator. I can't help feeling that one of the reasons we are so easily self-righteous about marching off to war is because we can't quite grasp the reality of it. In this century, we've had lots of opportunity to miss the reality of it. Books that speak of "glorious war", snappy songs that justify our cause, movies that make heroic archetypes live forever, long after the film has ended.

And we play games. We play games of war. Games against death. As if, through some mystical rehearsal, we can thwart death when it comes for us. As if, by reducing the awful mindless destruction of war to an abstract sequence of ploy and counter-ploy, we can wring something noble out of that most ignoble human activity.

With several hundred thousand people of real flesh and blood poised on the brink of real death of the body and spirit, and with the fates of millions of others in the balance, I think we would be all well served, the next time we sit down to a session of Orc-hacking 101 or Waterloo-the-way-it-should-have-been-fought, if we would pause a moment and spare a thought (and a prayer, if such is your personal inclination) for those whose saving rolls are being made by a higher authority.

I don't expect I will give up gaming, any more than I plan to give up SCA fighting after some 14 years. And I certainly don't expect any of you to give up gaming. What I'm after here is a little reflection on why we game, and a little debate on whether our passion for gaming feeds a passion for the real thing.

Well, I can't really apologize for the foregoing downer. It was something I felt I had to say, especially in the face of the jingoistic mood which seems to prevail in our corner of the world today. Let's get a new start on page 2.....

Another thing hinted at in Game/Foots gone by is some sort of guide to the acronyms most tripped over in APAE by yours truly. In no particular order then, are a few of them:

APA= Amateur Press Alliance (Can refer to a mailing, generically)
APAE= More than one APA
IMO= In My Opinion
IMHO= In My Humble Opinion (often sarcastic)
IFO= I For One
ILOL= I Laughed Out Loud
SMOF= Secret Masters of Fandom
IAJS= It's a Joke, Son (See also: Foghorn Leghorn)
WDIKA= What Do I Know, Anyway?
BFD= Big (Fat) Deal
GAL= Get a Life
ct= comment
re= in reference to
yr= your
MC= Mailing Comment
RAEBNC= Read and Enjoyed, But No Comment
APAHacker= one who writes for an APA
ICQ= I Chuckled Quietly

Well, anyway, that should be enough to get you started (Hi, Deena!). Then again, WDIKA?

Actually, I've been pretty good this outing. A page and a half of stuff either related to the larger questions of gaming and the fine print of APA writing. I guess it's time to plunge totally off the subject with mailing comments for MOTIVE #3 (Hi, Stewart!).

***************MAILING COMMENTS FOR MOTIVE #3**********************************

COVER: Masters Crabtree and MacWilliam—well done, guys. It's kind of a cross between King Kong and Leslie West (in the days when he played for Mountain). Kinda makes me wish I could tap into some talent to artistically render Ao Dai, my favorite character these days.....

WOE: The roster is getting there.....now if we can just have a little of the old Imperial Post to leaven out the mix (although I certainly understand why we had none last time.....).

MICHAEL: Re my CoC nonfeasance: Mea maxima culpa. I must slither across broken glass on my knees to Lourdes by way of contrition.///Shouldn't "Konnie Chung" be "Konnie Khung"?///Re Yorikk and the 78 Facets of Life: #14-78 are as many facets as most folks ever have in RPGs. Tis more the pity.///Re the survey: you ought to take one, blank out the name, run it, and see how many people can correctly I.D. it (you'd expect at least one, of course.....).///Nice puzzle, and a nice, dense Mard map (these guys must've studied urban planning under the Ch'in).

KEVIN & SONIA: Thanks for the continuing Cthulu Chronicles.///Is there a way to possess but ward the key so it doesn't throw off "power vibes"?///Re Why do Bad Gamers Happen to Good People: As the new, sanitized bumper sticker for Georgia proclaims, "Excrement Occurs". Gaming, like any other egalitarian hobby, will always have its share of knee-walking freezer eagles.///See you both next time.....

NICKY & JACKIE: The hardest part of character maintenance is striking the balance between believeability and utility. In Deena's current Champions' campaign, there is a character whose self-absorption, while internally consistant, is a problem for others in the party because it inhibits his interaction. Still, we're working on the guy; if the current timeline has a successful resolve, my character should be far better adjusted for all the trauma. Or, we could just kill him off.....

The task of finding and maintaining balance is made more precarious by differing views on where that point lies. Also, none of this occurs in a vacuum. Gaming personae are oblique takes on the personality of their creators; the same is true for the processes of world-building and scenario creation. RPGs are worth playing, in part, because of the infinite variety of that/those visions./// Actually, Jackie, it's easy to photocopy from red paper......but it is a bitch to read, most times.

Re internal "fixing" of bad gaming habits: Don't you generally find that those most in need of an "attitude adjustment" are those who are least likely to be aware of that fact?///As always, gang, enlightening reading.....

PAT & CARL: I liked Muskie ("He's not good, he's just drawn that way.") Here's yet another delicate, sensative Crabtree illo.///"Paper bag Game": what a neat concept.///Re GM Archetypes: ILOL!!!///"ChartMaster" Grins Galore./// Carl, your candor (or was it another Kryptonian bottled city?) on page 9 was admirable, and a prime example of why I find APA writing/reading so rewarding. Gracias!

A.J.: Who is dis articulate guy writin' dis zine?(Said in a Phelanesque way). It shore ain't Arnor the Reticent (and, for the record, that's just fine with me!)///Good rigor in your worldview and good development of your cultural mythos. Now, having been a nice guy, a question about Chaos and Good/Evil: If individuals have primacy over the collective in the Chaoist worldview, do we assume utopian conduct for all individuals? If not, how are conflicts between "strong individuals" resolved? (My own suspicion is that the way you can tell compromise apart from government is that the latter has more paperwork.....).

Re Liddel-Hart: I am reminded that Rommel and Guderian studied extensively the tactical cavalry genius of Nathan Bedford Forrest and the strategic ploys of Lee and Napoleon. So too did Tranh and Giap study Liddel-Hart in preparing the defensive offense of Vietnam, starting in the 1940's. The more things change, eh?///More on Stat/Tac next time, yes? Maybe I'll start running critical analysis of pivotal historic battles, just for grins.

JONATHAN: Re my "dictionary fetish": If I didn't write polysyllabically, you'd scarcely know I'd been in graduate school at all. When I can, and when I'm not sermonizing, I try to employ the KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid) rule. I guess I'll just have to try harder.....///Liked the ~~erzatz~~ fake Atlanta cover —— where was Rob Lowe? Are the Minutemen going to be working the '96 Olympics (or, for that matter, the '95 Worldcon)?///Looks like Hotaru's day is about to go to hell on pg. 10.///Etiquette on Edge is tougher than a woman trying to get into the New England Patriots' lockerroom.....

JON: Liked the Shoggoth illo.///Who's the Horny Muffin Mistress on page 10? Does she hang out with Lucky Pierre???///As for the rest, RAE as usual, but unfortunately, NC.

PAUL: You drive the car you drive and have the nerve to call me a "weirdo"? Well, as they said in Blue Velvet: "It's a strange world."///As for your comment to Wayne, hey, it was all Greek to me.....

KEITH: "Groovy"? "GROOVY"??? You've GOT to quit hanging around Phelan.../// Re yr ct me lasty: No, no, you wouldn't.///In deference to That Happenin' Null kinda Guy, no "comments on comments" for you (at least, not this time.....).

& DEENA: Re MCs and what one reads first: Plowing through MCs first is a pretty common habit (generally referred to as "egoscanning"). Because at least a part of this exercise is finding out what others think of one's ability to communicate in this forum, the fine creature "egoboo" (as in "Ego Boosting") is an integral part of the game. (For more on this, see MOTIVE's first annual (and perhaps last annual) "Egoboo Poll" elsewhere in this Fine Family Publication).///See elsewhen for the Guide to APA acronyms. Some are pretty standard, others less so.///Re Don Knotts: I refer you, oh paranoid one, to my cts to Young Master Peacock circa MOTIVE #1. This, not your father, is the wellspring of that particular weltanschuung (sp).///Much grass por le guidos del pronunciaciones.

Re gender and gaming: I'll just bet that a specific incident or three sparked this, neh? My own observation has been that those sorts of things follow personality types— "natural" hosts vs. "natural" guests.....sort of like those that pitch in at SCA events...and those that don't (nudge, nudge, wink, wink, say no more!). Or am I missing something at our Champions sessions?///Re yr description of Master Paul: "when evil rears its heads" ILOL!!! You gave a fine capsule description of our adventure to this point (with more, I guess, to follow).

PETER: "Anal-Retentive"? "Buttload"??? Hey, whose squire are you, anyway?/// I personally think you developed Babylon because it was easier than expanding the Catacombs, but then again, WDIKA?///Perhaps an Ao Dai view of the world will follow my Young MCs.....maybe./// Since your interworld gates are geomagnetically influenced, is accessing easier on an 11-year cycle that corresponds to increased sunspot activity? Just think of the fun you could have in a current or future world scenario in which nukes could put out EMPs and make the whole mess pulsate like Kate Bush!!!

Hey guy, gotta go don some organs. In an urban town. Where the hammerhead trout wear Faces I Know.....

GREG: Condolences on the damaged digits. It didn't seem to get in the way of some severe getting down at the Johnny Clegg and Savuka concert..... glad you're on the mend.///Your continuing saga is a nice melding of Amerind mythlore and space opera. Deitz has already proved there's a market for doing the same with fantasy. Now it's your turn.....keep that snake a'crawlin'.....

ROBERT: The repo in your zine was a little funky; the content was fine. Especially the Black Hills detail, all of which I got a chance to experience firsthand in June. Best of all was the "up close and personal" with a bison bull just outside of Wind Cave National Park. The thought of the Sioux retaking this sacred land was delicious to contemplate. For a good look at how it was, I recommend you see Dances With Wolves, supposed to be the most authentic look at Plains Indian culture in film to date.

ME: What, no GAME!!??!

STEWART: What was infantile about pg. 20 (he asked, tongue placed delicately in cheek)?///As always, DTAF is a delight to the eye.///Re Knuckles: What's the attack potential of the electric guitar as sonic disruptor? As club? ///Re NG Database: As long as you're risking: A) Your Shirt; B) Your Privacy; C) Your Sanity; D) All of The Above; what the heck. Give it a shot. You might even make a kopek or 3.

& CHAD: Great continuing play diary. More, please.....

JOHN: Welcome. It was a fine pretentious opening.///The character sheets are way cool. I hope that we will see more in the future which are adapted to other systems.

DARRELL: The interesting thing about the simple/complex debate here in MOTIVE has been the sliding scale— for example, Champions runsthe gamut from "simple" to "more complex".///Thanks for the Stronghold campaign sketch..... "Huggy Bear"???///Still no ideas for a name.....I'll leave that to ~~Lord Byron~~ Keith.

GREG & WALTER & JESS & DAVID: Hope to see you guys in #5.....

SO MUCH FOR MAILING COMMENTS ON MOTIVE #3**************************************

So what do you do if you're a couple of hundred years old, stand about 7½ feet tall, wear a year-round fur coat, are about a million leagues from home, and desperate to get away from the Moslems, one of whom you've just killed to escape a life of involuntary servitude and strange sexual practices?

Why, you join a roving band of adventurers bound for Babylon, of course. And, if it were the practice of your people to write, you might keep.....

AO DAI'S TRAVEL DIARY

Away from sleepingplace, must find nice peoples to hide with before clothheads catch and make hump-beast with......

Have found nice and scary peoples to make tripping with....new friends are:

Clean Yellow Fish Man— not fighting but sometimes scary smiling witch man, he makes not talk much, and not fighting good but with bow sometimes. Is good friend for making Clear Lizard Blind and into walking walls. Eat too much fish.

Dirty Small Weasel Man— likes to kill badthings, but plenty creepings too, he probably afraid of water, but not afraid of badthings and like deerstuff, but too burned to be tasting good for Ao Dai. I think he afraid of witchlady too. That makes him smart, like Ao Dai. Too short to be Ao Dai brother. Too bad.....

Quiet Magic Fire Leader— Comes later from sun sleeping-place....talk funny but not too much and making magic things with flying and fire. Not much good to fight but plenty magic to slow down badthings for Ao Dai. Which makes Ao Dai sing warsong. Ishkabibble!!!

Scary Witchlady— She smile too much for to trust Ao Dai. Me afraid but will not show, for mighty warrior am I! She kills badthings, but maybe goodthings too. She sneaky but Ao Dai smart and will watch. If she for making mistake, Ao Dai tear off legs and make happy poundings.

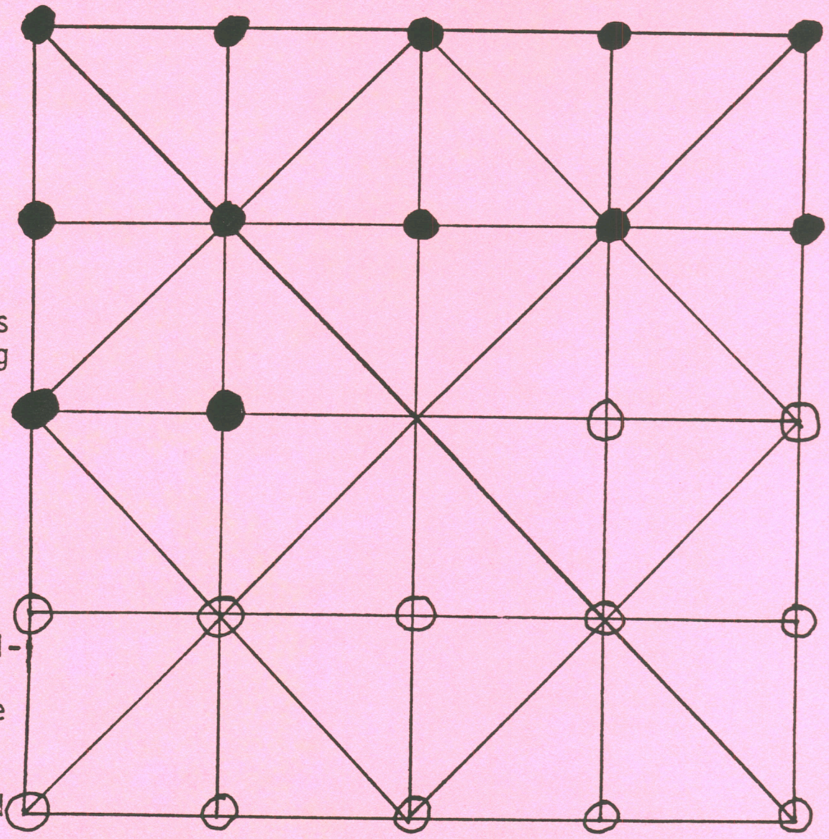
Strong Hairless Short Beautiful Warrior Mate— Will do anything for mate....she save Ao Dai when Ao Dai alone. Good fighter spirit and much killings have she, and Ao Dai does pounding ritual and tearing dance every time in her honor. This one remind Ao Dai of home.....

Many travellings make we to hotplace that makes Ao Dai scratch too much.... it is good the coming of whitestuff to cool Ao Dai. We see many fishfaces and plenty out of ground deadthings which make us run away, to make Ao Dai sad for no poundings or warsongs to be sung here. In place of boats across water, much killings and making of new bow from legs of young manthing. I sing bravesong of him and tear off legs....Ao Dai too hungry and eat some too. Ishkabibble!!! Place of many dead humans leads to round water and cats of rock which make Ao Dai not seeing for a while...then to Bigroomplace with much fightings of hard tokill ones and Bigwoman flying. She fall down from sky and Ao Dai makes happy dance on her with many hootings. All dead ladythings for mate and much warsinging. Now the magic man has writing rocks and Ao Dai wants to go to the place of whitestuff.........................

And thus is the world of Peter's Babylon Campaign seen through the eyes of one of the more inarticulate members of the party.....Next time, and extended look at the Champions World according to Paul Thibideaux.

To close out this offering of TGIAF, we will reinstate a feature which was conspicuously absent from last mailing. The Featured Game for this issue is:

ALQUERQUE: This is a move-and-capture battle game which is considered the progenitor of the modern game of checkers. Its origin and Arabic roots are not specifically known; it is, however, known that the Moors were responsible for introducing the game to Spain, and hence, the West. The game has many variations and names: Marro (Catalonia), Marelle (Italy), Damma (the Sahara), and the ever-popular Natt klab ash-shawk (Palestine). Although there were numerous types of board configurations and minor rule modifications, the most widespread variant of the game board would seem to be the example shown here:



Play alternates between 2 players, with the beginning board set-up of 12 pieces each as shown. Movement occurs along lines into open intersections. The object is to capture all of your opponent's pieces, and capture is accomplished by means of the jump over one opposing piece at a time into an adjacent open square. Multiple jumps are possible as in modern checkers.

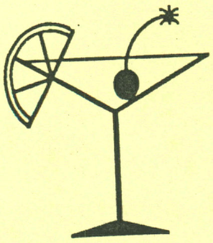
Jumps are mandatory; failure to take a jump is penalized by the huff, that is, your opponent may remove one of your pieces as a penalty. Movement can be either forwards or backwards. There is no "kinging" maneuver allowed.

First move is determined by the drawing of lots.

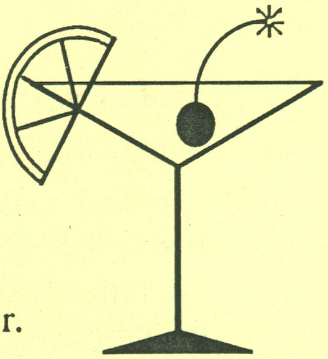
Because of the configuration of the board, the mechanics of the multiple jump are more complex than those in modern checkers. One can shift from a diagonal axis to an orthogonic one, and even shift from one to the other while reversing directions if the configuration of your opponent's pieces will allow it. Thus, the potential for "snatching victory from the jaws of defeat" is high if one player allows their attention to lapse in the final stages of the game. Truly, the end game here is at least as important as the first stages of movement.

This game was widely played across Europe, Asia, Northern Africa, and even the American Southwest during the period from about A.D. 900 on.

And that just about does it for this time. The page nears its end, and I really must go, for you see.........The Game is A Foot....................



Moltav Cocktails w/ a twist of lime



... And now, an exclusive interview with a new **Motive** subscriber.

Ficticious Interviewer: So, Miss Pritchett, what brings you to you to **Motive**?

Heather Pritchett: Umm, Thats Ms Pritchett, if you don't mind, and I've joined **Motive** mainly because I have many friends who are members and it looks like fun.

FI: Ahh.. Well, thats nice, but what are your REAL reasons! I mean, the deep down dirt??!!

HP (*sarcasticly*): Ok, you beat it out of me, I'm a spy from an Iraquian Fanzine.

FI (*aside*): I knew it!! My fortune is made.. **maniacal laughter**

HP: Look, is this gonna be an interview or a journalistic drool-off?

FI: Huh? Oh sorry.. uh.. So, have you ever met Saddam Hussein? **[Remember kids, it's 'I' before 'E', except after 'C', and in the sounds of neighbor and Hussein.]**

HP: Look you evolutionary throw-back, I was just kidding about the Iraquian spy stuff!!! IT WAS A JOKE! J. O. K. E! A JOKE!!

FI: ... I knew that...

HP: This is stupid. This interview is going nowhere! Where's my lawyer?

FI: NO! Wait! I'm sorry Mis.. err Ms Pritchett. Lets start over. What sort of role playing games do you play?

HP: Thats more like it. My all time favorite game is Champions. It was the first RPG I ever played (years before AD&D) and I personally feel it is superior to all other games I have played. I will also be the first to admit that the scope of "all other games I have played" is not very wide. I am really only experienced in a handful of other RPGs, these being CyberPunk, Shadowrun, TORG, Psi World, Gurps, Call of Cthluha (sp?), Star Wars and, of course, the ever-present and over-rated AD&D.

FI: Am I to take it you don't like AD&D?

HP: It's not that I don't like it, it's just that I don't think it's the big deal everyone seems to make of it. There's too much "randomness" in character generation and not enough specifics in combat. Make sense?

FI: No, not really. Are there any other RPGs that you're not very fond of?

HP: Well, I've never been a big fan of Rolemaster or Palladium.

FI: Sounds like you have it in for fantasy games.

HP: No, not really, I think it's just because I haven't had that much experience with them, I've only played them a handful of times, and I am mainly dissatisfied with the amount of time it takes to make a character. In my humble opinion, an unexperienced player should be able to crank out a character in less than an hour and I just haven't found this true in my past experiences with Rolemaster or Palladium.

FI: I find it interesting that you are critisizing complex games only a few paragraphs after you praised Champions as being: "superior to all other games I have played." Many people find Champions to be a very difficult game to play.

HP: Actually, I don't think Champions is that complex. I believe a beginning player can create a simple character (like a "brick") in less than hour. Then, after they have mastered the basics, they can create more complex characters. Of course, let me once again reiterate the fact that I have only attempted to play Rolemaster and Palladium once and my only knowledge of the games comes from that limited experience. It's completely feasible that I may one day actually finish a Rolemaster character and actually get to play the game and LOVE IT, but for now I will live my own underrated opinions.

FI: Hmmm.. Well, I think we're run the subject of RPGs into the ground. Are there any board games that you play regularly?

HP: I'm a big fan of Illuminati and the Judge Dredd Board game. (I've always liked games were the main goal is to screw over the other players.)

FI: Why does that not surprise me.

HP: I also like card games, Hearts and Spades to specific. I'm better at Hearts since I'm not very good at the bidding part of spades.

FI: Very interesting. Well, now that you're tortured us with your gaming opinions, how about telling us a little about yourself.

HP: Well, I'm a navy brat, which means I saw lots of exotic places before I was 6 years old, and all I remember are the playgrounds. I'm currently finishing up a degree in Computer Science at the University of Georgia.

FI: What are you going to do after you graduate?

HP: I'm going to try and get a job here in Athens for 9 months, and then in fall of 91 go to graduate school.

FI: Interesting. So, what is your lifelong goal? I mean, what is all of this leading up to?

HP: oy, Good question. I really have no idea. I guess get a job, and make enough money to support all my sordid habits: gaming, comic books, SCA and exotic mixed drinks.

FI: What sort of job?

HP: Preferably one that will pay me lots of money to do something I enjoy and doesn't encroach on my weekends. But beyond that, I have no idea.

FI: Hmmmm.. 7 years of college and you still don't know what you want to be when you grow up??? Tell us more about these sordid habits of yours?

HP: Well, I've already run the gaming topic into the ground. I am currently in several campaigns right now. I play in a space-Hero's campaign about once or twice a month, I play TORG and Champions once a week, and AD&D every other week, and I also run a Champions game occasionally when my TORG gaming group gets "TORGed out". I read several varieties of comic books, mostly Marvel and mostly mutant. I also read Elementals and several other independents. I'm very involved in the local SCA group here, (thats Society of Creative Anachronisms, for all you mundanes.)

FI: What about the exotic mixed drinks?

HP: My personal favorite is an Opie Romanoff, thats vodka and apple juice.

FI: Whats you're favorite color?

HP: Black.

FI: Whats your preferred food?

HP: Mexican.

FI: Your favorite cartoon?

HP: Warner Brother's "One Froggy Evening," with Michigan J. Frog.

FI: Ummm.. any annoying habits our readers might be interested in?

HP: I'm very loud and intimidating. I also change my haircolor at the drop of a hat and bite my fingernails.

FI: Whats your sign?

HP: Look, this is ridiculous. This interview is going nowhere. You've obviously run out of things to ask.

FI: Look. I don't have to stay here and take this abuse! I could go anywhere in this fanzine and be abused!

HP: Oh yeah? Well, I'll have you know you're just a figment of MY imagination, and I can do anything to you I want!

FI: Oh yeah?

HP(concentrating): Yeah.

Mel Gibson: .. Whether tis nobler in the heart to suff.. hey? What happened? Where am I?

HP: You're in my article.

MG: Uh Oh. I don't think my director's going to like this.

HP: Well, I sure am. Guess that's it's for the interview. S'long folks.

[illegible] 30 AA. [illegible] Stiletto: 2 + 6 7 9 11 12 Blak [illegible] XO3 [illegible] Warloc

Value	Characteristics	Cost	Base	Pts
23	STR	x1	10	10
37	DEX	x3	10	57
20	CON	x2	10	20
20	BODY	x2	10	20
28	INT	x1	10	18
11	EGO	x2	10	2
13	PRE	x1	10	3
18	COM	x½	10	6
20	PD (STR/5)	x1	4	16
10	ED (CON/5)	x1	5	5
7	SPD 1+(DEX/10)	x10	3	20
12	REC (STR/5)+(CON/5)	x2	9	6
40	END (CONx2)	x½	58	0
41	STUN (BODY)+(STR/2)+(CON/2)	x1	40	0

Characteristics Cost:

Powers Cost+

Total Cost= 120

Attack	OCV	DCV	Damage
Punch	+0	+0	x1
Haymaker*	+0	−5	x1½
Kick*	−2	−2	x1½
Block	+0	+0	—
Dodge	—	+3	—
Grab	−1	−2	—
Move By	−2	−2	x½ + V/5
Move Through#	−V/5	−3	x1 + V/3
Martial Punch	+0	+2	x1½
Martial Kick	−2	+1	x2
Martial Block	+2	+2	—
Martial Dodge	—	+5	—
Martial Throw	+V/5	+1	x1 + V/5

*+1 segment #attacker take ½ damage

Disadvantages 100+	Pts
D-NPC (Dad, 11-, Normal)	+15
Hunted (Army [illegible])	+15
Hunted (AT&T,	+25
Secret Identity	+15
Code Against Killing normals 15	~~+20~~
D-NPC ([illegible], 11- Team)	+20
[illegible]	~~25~~

Experience 0

Disadvantages Total:

Experience Spent+ 27 16+9

Total Points= 215

CHAMPIONS

THE SUPER HERO ROLE PLAYING GAME

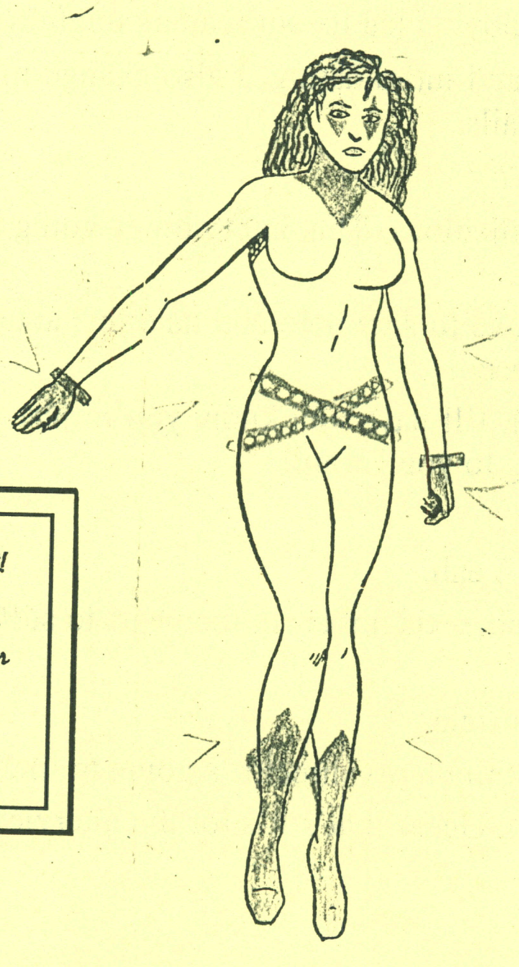
NAME: Stiletto

Secret ID: [illegible]

Player:

Pts	Powers	END
10	Acrobatics (15-)	
3	Escape Artist (13-)	
5	Computer Programming (15-)	
5	Security Systems (15-)	
5	Stealth (15-)	
20	Martial Arts 7D6 Punch 10D6 Kick	
+4	Gliding (+4 for [illegible] 3 pts)	NO
+12	gloves — Activation Role — (11 or less) Forcefield	
	OAF ↑ Endurance Battery X2	Power Drain
	(Doesn't Work under water or in Rain)	5d6
4	2 extra Running	
+5	Communications AF	
+54	7 All Levels	
25	Knife (6) 2D6K → 3½ D6	

95 = Powers Cost



OCV (DEX/3): 11 Hit

DCV (DEX/3): 11 Damage

ECV (EGO/3): 4

Levels:

PD: 20 ED: 10

END:

STUN:

BODY:

PHA
1
(2)
3
(4)
5
(6)
(7)
8
9)
10
11
12

Move:

INT Roll (9+INT/5): 15

DEX Roll (9+DEX/5): 15

EGO Roll (9+EGO/5): 11

PER Roll (9+INT/5): 15

Hey Wow... My very first character sheet!

How many people still have THIIS Lying around? Is this unintelligible or what? Almost as bad as this silly Mac font... sheesh... And I thought my HANDWRITING was bad ! ! !

Permission Granted to Photocopy for Personal Use Only – Copyright © 1982 Hero Games

41-14- 7 5 [illegible]

Nicky Rea & Jackie Cassada/664 Lakeshore Dr,Asheville,NC 28804/(704)2522671

Now starring in: Rated:

DRUID'S CAULDRON/WITCH'S BREW DRUID'S CAULDRON/WITCH'S BREW
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Introducing the wondrous dashless prose of those O.F.B.W.B.'s (see Entry under either Jackie or Nicky or both)

*** Please note that the designs and strangeness of this month's logo for this column are due entirely to Nicky being overtired. If you like this logo, let us know. If you don't like it, oh well... the great hope for tomorrow is that it might change!

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^ You will understand why these funny little squiggly things are there when you read the article (or, maybe not).

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Life without a graphics program is like a computer without any dash!!!
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DRUID'S CAULDRON/WITCH'S BREW IV

You would think that for once, with two months between MOTIVE submissions, rational, somewhat sane, and responsible adults (albeit gaming adults) would be able to think ahead and plan their articles to avoid a last minute rush to meet a deadline, wouldn't you? I remember thinking as I put the finishing, fading touches on last issue's rantings and ravings, that NEXT issue I would get my act together, get my submission planned early, and have a lot of time to work on it. Well...here it is, November 11; the clock is ticking down, and I'm just starting to compose my offering for this issue (Nicky hasn't even STARTED hers yet). IT'S NOT MY FAULT!

Honestly, a lot has happened in a short two months. In my non-MOTIVE existence I am a (gasp!) reviewer for Library Journal (some of you already knew that). I write 10 columns for them a year, reviewing science fiction and fantasy novels with regard to recommending them for purchase or non-purchase by libraries. Because of LJ's vacation schedule, I had two columns due in October--which meant a steady stream of extracurricular reading (at night, during lunch hours, sometimes at work, etc.) which didn't leave much time for cauldroning or brewing. I kept telling myself: "I have a LONG weekend coming up in November. I'll use that time and just make the MOTIVE deadline."

A few years ago at GENCON I bought a button from a button dealer because I thought it was cute. It said "Never meddle in the affairs of cats, for they are subtle and will piss on your computer." Just a few minutes ago, when I sat down to write what you are even now reading, I had a little trouble getting my computer to boot up. THE CATS HAD PISSED ON THE KEYBOARD!!! Thanks to some quick work by Beth Bostic, a kitchen knife, and lots of banging and cursing, we got the thing working--but for a little while I was afraid I would have to resort to a typewriter or (dare I say it?) pen and paper for this latest installment of the continuing saga of two women in search of a wailing wall.

Before I step into it with both feet, a few non-mailing comments: Carl--thanks for your Gamemaster archetypes. Of course, I don't fall into ANY of those categories...Actually, they bring back some fond, and not-so-fond memories. I also have to confess that I really hope "The Anonymous Freshman" in "THE BLUE VIEW" keeps coming up with more wonderful insights on the world at large. Also, to Deena, an emphatic YES to the issue of Gender and Gaming. I love opening cans of worms--but the can-opener goes to you on this topic. I intend to address the subject as soon as I can quit writing this introduction and get on with the "manuscript proper."

There are several topics I want to cover this time round. I have threatened to entertain/bore you all with "The Secret History of the Friday Night Game"--and I think its time has come. There are also some points I'd like to address on competition in gaming (a volatile issue in some arenas). And there are also a few things I missed in previous issues of MOTIVE that I might as well comment on here and now. So here goes nothing...

THE PLAY'S THE THING, OR COMPETITION IN GAMING

For several years, both Nicky and I have been members of the Role Playing Game Association [commonly known as RPGA (TM)]. We have thus become involved in tournament gaming, playing for points, and in running tournaments at several conventions. Why do we do this? What do we get out of it? Does this mean that we emphasize competition and winning over everything else? What happened to the "it's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game" attitude that makes gamers different from bridge, poker, or Trivial Pursuit players?

I have never thought of myself as a competitive person--or, more accurately, I have never thought of myself as someone who could win in a competitive situation. My first experiences with tournament competition at GENCON were tinged with fear and nervousness. I was going to be GRADED on my performance as a gamer! That first year, I advanced as an alternate from the first round to the second round--meaning that out of six players at a table, I came in fourth. I was so disheartened that I didn't even bother to show up for the second round competition.

The next year, Nicky and I were accompanied to GENCON by a whole troop of people from Asheville: Jim Crabtree, Beth Bostic, and Tony Dills--to be explicit. Nicky and I once again, but with much trepidation, entered the RPGA (TM) feature, a three-round tournament called "Gypsy," written by Frank Mentzer (see MOTIVE issue III for more on Frank). The first round was a lot of fun to play--and both Nicky and I advanced to the second round. At that point, the cheering section kicked in. With Jim and Beth and Tony rooting us on, we played the second round--and advanced to the final round. Serious trepidation ensued. I remember thinking "I hate this! Why am I doing this to myself?" as I suffered all the symptoms of a typical panic reaction during the award ceremony. I even remember thinking "What if Nicky wins something and I don't?"

I won a third place in "Gypsy" that year and Nicky took a "first" to the delight of Jim "I told you so" Crabtree and the others and to the amazement of both me and Nicky. I didn't even feel bad that she placed higher than I did--I am still convinced that she is a "better" role-player than I am (for reasons that constitute an entire issue's worth of DC/WB text).

From then on, we were "hooked." Before that, however, Nicky and I had both been gamemastering RPGA (TM) tournaments at MOC. We originally started doing it as a favor to Roland Castle and Joey Masden (and still do), without realizing that one got "points" for gamemastering. It was only when I took a close look at the player's scoring sheets for tournaments that I realized that the players were scoring the gamemaster on his/her performance, organization, role-playing, etc. That was scary, but somehow, I couldn't stop "doing it."

WHY? After seeing a number of my gaming friends (a term I use to refer to people whom I would not have met had I not been a gamer) go through phases in which they were alternately really keen on competition or else ready to give up tournament gaming altogether, I began to look seriously at my own approach to tournament gaming and to ask myself some difficult questions. If one of the attractions of gaming is its lack of competition and the absence of a clear-cut winner or loser, why do I consistently subject myself to competitive situations by entering or running tournaments? How important is winning to me? Does the fact that I have umpteen thousand "points" as a player or as a gamemaster actually mean that I am a better player than someone who has fewer points than me? And if it doesn't mean that, what does it mean?

Recent experiences in Masters' and Grand Masters' tournaments at GENCON have resulted in some "hot words" by both Nicky and me in the last issue of MOTIVE, all with regard to the "competitive beast." Despite those words, I still intend to continue competing in tournaments--and running tournament games. And because of those experiences, I now think I know why.

First of all, I DO like winning. I like doing something well, knowing I do it well, and being given objective confirmation that I have done something well. I LOVE praise. Winning in a competition is one form of getting praise. Secondly, I firmly believe that competition has made me a better player. Anyone who has ever performed for an audience--whether by acting, playing music, debating, or in SCA tourneys--knows what it means to achieve "the edge." Both Nicky and I play in a quasi-rock band. We have rehearsals semi-regularly, and those rehearsals are fun in and of themselves--but they are NOTHING when compared to the act of playing for an audience. I can feel myself turn "ON" when I perform. And tournament competitions do the same for me.

It has been my experience that in non-competitive games--the games we play at home--players get lazy and tend to lose the focus necessary to keep a game going. I have seen a lot of games degenerate into kibbitzing sessions, game-mechanics discussions, gossip sessions, or just plain silliness. This may all be fun, but it's NOT gaming as I would like to game. Playing in tournaments reminds me (most of the time, anyway) of what gaming should be like. The best tournament games have been really satisfactory cooperative efforts among six role-players to achieve a common goal.

A few years ago, the AGS tried an experiment in gaming: the RANDOM session. Gamemasters announced their games and players ranked them in order of preference, writing their names and choices for games on a piece of paper. The papers were all put into a hat, and names were drawn. As each name was drawn, the lucky player got slotted into the game of his/her preference until lack of space dictated otherwise. What resulted was a more-or-less random mix of players. People got a chance to game with new people--and gamemasters got a chance to have unfamiliar players in their games. A few people commented on the fact that the atmosphere in those games was considerably different from other games run at the club. One person even remarked that it seemed "more like tournament play." I believe that in that random session, people were trying very hard to play their best all the time--because they weren't as familiar with the other players and, in many cases, with the gamemaster. Each person was on his/her best behavior. This was the case in the game I ran, and seemed to be the case in the other games as well.

This sense of "playing one's best" is what I find most appealing about competitive gaming.

Playing in tournaments at conventions also has another advantage for me. I get the opportunity to see styles of play that are different from what I see at home. I learn things from other people--new ways to role play, new approaches to solving problems, new methods of bringing out a character's personality. I believe I have already mentioned in the last issue that I steal shamelessly from other gamemasters at conventions. All this, I feel, helps expand my repertoire of "things to do when I game."

I know that I will never convince a non-competitor that competition is good--and I believe that competition can have a detrimental effect on gamers when it becomes more than "just a game." I do think, however, that one can learn a lot about oneself and other people--not just in regard to gaming--by competing.

I'm still struggling with myself over whether or not to write off the GENCON Grand Masters tournament on the basis of my last experience with it. On the one hand, I don't have the time or the patience to put up with grandstanders, and I realize that it is an uphill battle to redefine the standards for "good role-playing" as I feel they should be defined. On the other hand, opting out of a bad situation is one way to ensure the perpetuation of what is objectionable. Part of me refuses to stand aside and wants to dive back into the fray with both eyes open. I don't know yet which part of me will win. I believe that in the end, good-roleplaying will triumph over petty politicking and self-serving. (Sounds preachy, don't it?)

In any event, I've run out of wind on this topic. If it invites comment, I'll be thrilled--and only too happy to respond. But for now, I'll move on to something else...(Deena, this one's for you!).

WOMEN AND GAMING: WHERE ROLE PLAYING COUNTS

Nicky and I first started gaming back in the late 1970's. We were the only two gamers we knew, so we ran games for each other. Then Nicky enrolled in UNCA, became a drama major, and discovered Beckie and Gary--two drama students who were interested in gaming. Thus, our core-gaming group was born. Our house was where we gamed--and since Nicky and I are both slobs and lazy hostesses, the issue of game "courtesy" never came up. We all shared snack responsibilities. Beckie and Gary generally brought drinks for everyone. I ended up doing most of the running around for things because I always sat nearest the kitchen and everyone else was trapped between table and wall.

For various reasons, that particular gaming coterie dissolved, leaving Nicky and I to look for other gamers. We discovered the AGS, and our gaming lives were reborn. I have to admit that when we first began playing in groups that had more men than women I was a little wary, wondering if blatant sexism would rear its ugly head. Fortunately for us, that never really happened at the club. (Maybe because we're fat old broads, nobody really treated us as "chicks" or "gofers." I like to think it's because the men of the AGS are more than usually enlightened and liberated.)

In any case, we also began hosting games at our house outside club hours.

Currently, Nicky runs a Monday night game for me and Carla and Beth; I run a Friday night game for Nicky, Carla, Beth, Susan, and Bill; we also host a DR. WHO campaign for me, Nicky, Carla, Beth, Sherri, Jim Gantt, and Tony. On Sundays, I run a game at Carla and Beth's for Nicky, Carla, Beth, and Matt. In short, there are consistently more women than men in our current games (excluding the ones at the club). Because of this, I think that our "courtesy" data is skewed somewhat. A few statements of fact. Bill always brings snacks to the Friday night game and consistently brings me a large cup of coffee to get me going. Carla contributes Diet Pepsi to our refrigerator. Tony drinks all our root beer. Most people bring snacks to share. Nicky and I contribute our share of goodies. People get their own drinks. Sherri tries out her baking experiments on us regularly (we devoured each of her three attempts to get chocolate pound cake "right."). And we insist that the DR. WHO people help us get the trash together on Wednesday nights for Thursday pickup. (Sometimes we also con people into feeding the cats.)

I think most of us, at least insofar as my experience goes, pass muster on the courtesy issue (at least as we define courtesy). But I do think that the behavior Deena describes is not uncommon to other groups that are not quite as atypical as ours. I hesitate to generalize on the basis of my own experiences. To a large degree, many of my experiences have fallen "beyond the pale" of what is considered usual. The fact that sexism has not hit me as hard as it has some other women makes me no less a feminist. I wholeheartedly support the idea that common courtesy should transcend gender (i.e., the person with the free hand holds the door open for the person who is loaded down). In my case, and in Nicky's case, being old and bossy has its advantages as well.

We have, however, run into gender specific behavior in other gaming situations. The most common one occurs when a female player plays a male character, and is consistently refered to as "she" by the male players. I find that women are less likely to make that mistake than men are. Strangely enough, I have only had one male player make a pass at my female character in a situation that seemed contrived. It was in a Twilight 2000 scenario where a 16 year old boy playing in the game with us tried to come onto Galina, my ex Soviet paratrooper. I was the only woman in the game (both as player and as character). This was the second scenario in which I had played Galina, and she had already formed close ties of friendship with her companions and was falling in love with one of them (another Russian, an NPC played by our gamemaster). Robert Barnes, whose first MOTIVE submission appeared in the last issue, was running the game. He was clearly embarrassed at the behavior of this obviously immature player. I was probably less worried about it than Robert, because I knew that he wasn't about to have that sort of unpleasantness foisted on Galina. Galina simply challenged the young soldier to a drinking contest (vodka, of course), and we both drank ourselves silly and passed out. When we woke up the next morning, neither one of us could remember what had happened. This pleased me immensely and frustrated the other player to no end. Afterwards, Robert apologized profusely to me for the rude behavior of the other player. As I said, this was the only time I can remember something of this nature happening to me in a game...a remarkable tribute to the quality of players with whom I game.

I look forward to a lively discussion on this topic. I think Deena has hit on a subject that can provide considerable food for thought for many MOTIVE issues to come. I play both male and female characters with some regularity. I even have some gay characters that are lots of fun to play as the real people they are. Sexuality is important to the development of a character, but should be a natural outgrowth of game events and not something superimposed on a game because of the attitudes of the players. Thanks for getting the ball rolling, Deena. The game ought to be fast and furious.

MISSING LINKS

Somewhere along the line, I missed last issue's informal topic: simple vs. complex games. I do have a very few thoughts on the subject, so here they are. 1.) Wayne once said something in regard to game mechanics that impressed me at the time, and I think is worth repeating here. He said that the rules of a game determine to a large degree the content of the game. (I THINK that's close to what he said.) In other words, a game with few rules lends itself to faster paced, sometimes more grandiose games, than a game with very detailed mechanisms for resolving actions, combat, etc. Games with lots of rules generally result in very realistic action phases and slower paced games, due to the necessity of breaking down action sequences into many small steps. 2.) I personally prefer games that require minimal reference to rule books, charts, etc. I, therefore, prefer simple games (like my version of AD&D and DR. WHO) to complex games with regard to running. I will play complex games if the gamemaster will simply tell me what to roll when. 3.) Despite what Wayne says, it's always possible to make a simple game complex (by "improving" it) or a complex game simple (by ignoring most of the rules). It may not resemble the original in any way, shape, or form, but don't most of those rule books stress the fact that the "rules" are actually only "guidelines?" 4.) I STILL don't "do" movement!

Seriously, my cavalier approach to simple vs. complex games is not meant to belittle people who do pay attention to game mechanics and to the framework upon which games are built. I am not unlike those people who don't bother to learn the rules of poetry but write "stuff" they call "free verse." It's okay until you read free verse written by someone who actually knows what rules they are breaking. My strengths in gaming lie chiefly in creating interesting and usually complex scenarios and in making people care about what happens to their characters and the game world. I use rules to the limit of my understanding, and my understanding of rules is often quite limited. I rely on the rules experts in my games to coach me when I need it, and to forgive me most of the time.

And now that that's over with, on to the long anticipated...

SECRET HISTORY OF THE FRIDAY NIGHT GAME

PART I: ONCE UPON A TIME IN THULE AND HOW ONE GAME WORLD CAME TO BE

In 1985, Nicky and I discovered the AGS and met a lot of people who liked to game. We quickly struck up a friendship with Jim Crabtree and spent many long hours in person or on the phone talking about gaming. We theorized endlessly about what made a good game, how to run games, how to create games, compared our gaming styles, argued heatedly about game mechanics (at least, I pretended to argue about game mechanics) until one day, sometime in late 1985 or early in 1986, Jim said to me: " I'd really like to see you run a high level D&D game outside the club." I said, "I don't know if I can." He said, "Sureyoucan,causeI'dreallyliketoplayinoneandIthinkIknowsomeotherpeoplewhowouldbeinterestedaswell." I said, "What?" He said, "Sure you can, cause I'd really like to play in one and I think I know some other people who would be interested as well." I said, "I'll think about it." He said, "I knew you'd do it."

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In March 1986, a select group of people met at our house to begin what has become known as "The Friday Night Game," a campaign that has been going on with minimal interruption since then.

In between Jim's phone call and our first meeting, a lot went on. For one thing, I had assured Jim that I had a game world ready for running a high level campaign. What I actually had, was a crudely drawn (albeit beautifully colored) map outlining an amorphous land mass with water at the top and at the bottom of the page, a few countries and a mountain range scrunched together in the center of the map, and lots of white space all around it. The world had no name, and was, in short, a patchwork of hastily improvised countries where adventurers were "from" or places to which they had gone.

You see, back when Nicky and I were running games for each other, we had a few modules and the old PLAYERS HANDBOOK and DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE. Nicky rolled up a few characters for me to run through a scenario. Her first characters included a young fighter named Barclay of Fallfax (so I knew that our "world" had a country in it called "Fallfax"); a cleric called Heflin of St. Tara Coombe (from which we deduced that there was a place called "St. Tara Coombe" and a deity known as "St. Tara"); a dwarven thief named Dunphy of the Armagh Hills (so the world quickly developed a dwarven community by that name); a halfling you know what named Ceril Lightfingers from (where else?) The Shire; and an elven fighter/magic user named Gareth Greyleaf from someplace called the "Deep Forest." When Beckie and Gary joined us and I finally got a chance to play, I came up with a human mage named Julian Brady who had learned magic from the College of Math at Dunsmere; a female halforc fighter/assassin named Dorcas Longblood who came from a city called Arkham; a human monk named Simon Hawksbane who came from "Mt. Dancer" (whatever that was); and a dwarven fighter named Angus of Glea. Adventuring with our characters gave rise to places with names like Black Cliff Keep, the Gossamer Forest, the city of Fildran, and so on.

As we continued to create characters (which proliferated as fast as we could think of concepts around which to build them) who adventured haphazardly around the continent, place names began to pop up here and there on the map, with very little rhyme or reason about them. Gods also proliferated, as we acquired DEITIES AND DEMIGODS and systematically rolled up adherents for almost all of the powers described therein. (At least SOMETHING was systematic about what we did.)

Then I created the City of Bast. I stuck it down on the southern coast of the continent, and spent a long time working on it. I seemed to have a lot more time in those halcyon days of the early 1980s when Nicky and Beckie and Gary were all doing drama student type things and I spent a lot of nights alone with my gaming material (which had expanded considerably). Bast was created for the express purpose of making a city where adventurers could go to spend their money, sell their treasure from Monty Haul campaigns, etc. It was (and still is) a major undertaking: boasting over 100 fully stocked shops, nearly that many temples (fully described), about 50 inns and taverns with complete menus, etc. I will never never never design a city in THAT much detail again! (At least, the chances are very good that I won't.)

That was the world I had to work with when I agreed to run a high level game for some of our new gaming friends.

Jim quizzed me on game world essentials: major political movements, current wars and conflicts, secret organizations, powerful NPC's, major pantheons, and the "mythos" behind the world. Political movements? Wars? Secret Organizations? Major Villains?

I went back to the map and thought. Nicky and I conferred, for it was her world as well, and slowly, painfully, we discovered a few facts about the world.

First of all, the world was called THULE. I read somewhere that "Thule" was the Greek name given to a place that was supposed to be the most northerly part of the world. I decided, therefore, that our "Thule" was, in fact, the most northerly part of the multiverse (the end point of the worlds).

I also discovered that, since so many different gods existed on Thule and since there was no consistent mythos governing the attitudes and cultures of the world, that everyone on Thule had come from "somewhere else." I had run a game for Nicky, Beckie and Gary which dealt with an Aztec/Mayan/Incan culture. (I also ran it at the club when Nicky and I first joined. It was called "Mehica" and was an expanded version of a module I found in an old issue of DRAGON (TM) Magazine.) In explaining how this culture got to Thule, I told my players that the original Mehicans had come through a "gate" into this world.

From that bit of information, I deduced that lots of other people came to Thule through gates/portals/magic forests, etc. Thule began to develop out as a world to which "lost" cultures gravitated. (I have yet to locate the Lost Colony on Thule, but I've no doubt it's there.)

That still left us with the problem of determining "major political movements," "wars," and "secret organizations" (having handily disposed of the necessity of having a consistent mythos...or so I thought at the time).

I took another look at the map. I spotted the Kingdom of Galacia (the home of a pair of cavaliers that belonged to me and Gary, and an exiled king who was one of Nicky's NPCs. Galacia was currently overrun by barbarians, according to Nicky, and in a previous campaign, the City of Bast had eventually allowed the King of Galacia to form a government in exile within its borders. Well, that was one "war" and one "political movement" in the world. Then I noticed the fact that I had a halforc from Arkham, a city which I had located in the largely dwarven territory of Armagh. THAT seemed to indicate some interesting political aspects. Also, the name "Arkham," besides its obviously Lovecraftian connotations, sounded a lot like "Orc Home"; and so Arkham developed a history that involved a drow/orc alliance and an attempt to take over the world. The attempt resulted in the alliance's defeat by a combined army of humans and dwarves, who rebuilt and renamed Arkham as a fortress city. With a little maneuvering, it became a quasi Beirut/Belfast...a hot spot for trouble of all kinds in the world. It also gave me part of Thule's past history...the Drow/Orc Invasion. Two wars, two political situations, one bit of long term history. (Not bad, for starters.)

During the planning stages of the Friday Night game, I was on the phone to Crabtree almost daily. The conversations went something like this:

JIM: So, how's it coming?
ME: I'm still working on it. (Furiously color in more ocean on the map.)
JIM: Let's see, we were talking about secret organizations on your world...
ME: (Ulp!) Yeah, there are lots of secret organizations on Thule.
JIM: So what are they and which ones will my character belong to?
ME: Well, what kind of secret organizations does you character WANT to belong to?
JIM: I was thinking of something along the lines of Lythande's Blue Star Guild...secret orders of mages, that kind of thing.
ME: Yeah. Okay. I'll have to look over what I have and let you know, but I've really gotta get off the phone now.

Phone conversation ends. Panic begins. I begin frantically looking through my notes on every game I've ever played/run on Thule. Eventually I come up with a list of "secret" or "quasi secret" organizations/guilds/brotherhoods, etc. to satisfy anyone. In Bast I have The Society of Wizards, The Associated Illusionists, and the Sisters of Night (I was listening to a lot of Fleetwood Mac a la Stevie Nicks in those days). They weren't exactly secret organizations, but they were guilds. Armagh proved somewhat more lucrative in the secret organization department. Because of the political nature of that city as I had begun to envision it, there was one approved Mages Guild in Arkham which was closely tied to the military structure of the city; I decided to call it the Guild of Might. There were also, inevitably, two secret mages' guilds: one I called The Invisible School, the other became known as The Black Guild. I hadn't the foggiest notion as to what they were all about...but the names sounded cool.

The Deep Forest, with its mostly nonhuman population and its relatively cosmopolitan adventurers city of Elberon, lent itself to the formation of The Tower Guild (located at the Wizard's Tower in the Deep Forest..a creation of Nicky's) and the Star Guild of Elberon.

The theocracy of Eiregund evolved from my interest in Irish history and from the necessity of finding someplace to locate St. Tara Coombe (home of the aforementioned Heflin of...). A theocracy would of necessity have only one mages' guild and that guild would be carefully supervised by the theocrats in power. Hence the Eiregund Mage's Guild (no points for originality on that one). I named the mage's guild in Fallfax "The Circle." Galacia had a (now disbanded) mages' guild called Les Changeurs. While Northumble, an anarcho syndicalist commune near Fallfax, had (what else?) the Northumble Free Mages.

Country by country I did the same thing for Thieves' and Assassins' Guilds, Ranger Organizations, and Bardic Schools. Then I got fancy and just threw in some mysterious sounding organizations for good measure: The Keepers of the Black Door, for example. I wasn't sure what the Black Door had to do with anything, but I was fairly certain that sooner or later inspiration would

Another phone conversation with Jim:

ME: Your character belongs to The Keepers of the Black Door.
JIM: Sounds alright. What is it?
ME: It's this secret society of mages who guard against the opening of these black portals into Thule.
JIM: What's on the other side of the portals?
ME: Um...You're not sure. That information is lost in legend. (Yeah, that's it...lost in legend).
JIM: But shouldn't the Keepers have some access to that information?
ME: Well, they do, but it's all very vague...and a lot of it was destroyed at one time.
JIM: Oh? How?
ME: I have to get off the phone now. The cats need to be fed.

Back to the drawing board. Looking at Thule, what I had was a world that was, thanks to Jim's persistent questions, shaping up into something more than what it had been. But it was a world that existed in the eternal present.

I needed some sort of consistent history. Furthermore, I needed a history that wouldn't violate any of the various campaign histories previous adventures on Thule had discovered. When I was designing the City of Bast, I detailed Bast's Museum of Ancient History, and in it covered about 5,000 years of history as Bast had experienced it. I included an invasion by barbarians, a giant infestation, a Dragon War, a Necromancers' War, and the Drow/Orc invasion. I also had a separate history developing around the countries of Fallfax, Eiregund, Northumble and the Deep Forest (located in an area of the world we called Cullain). But there was also this place called Barovia (where a castle named "Ravenloft" stood. There were also the remains of various picked over and pawed through dungeons dotted here and there around the landscape...each with its own peculiar "history" that had to fit into the overall scheme of things.

What it all boiled down to was that I just didn't know enough about the ancient history of Thule to make any consistent sense of what had happened to than that, the world was shaping up nicely. It was time for: a GLOSSARY OF PLACE NAMES.

Up until I agreed to run this "high level" campaign, Thule had never needed a definitive listing of what was where. We had always had "the map" to fill out as needed ("Is that some blank space on the map? Great, that's where I'll set the next game!"). But this enterprise was somehow more serious than anything that had gone before. This was meant to be something BIG. And I intended it to be something wonderful, as well.

I listed all the place names (countries, cities, lakes, forests, etc.) that were currently on the map, alphabetized them, and then proceeded to explain them. Then I did the same for the list of organizations that had suddenly appeared on Thule. Over the course of several years of playing with Beckie and Gary and Nicky, we had created perhaps 200 different player characters among us, and I was able to draw from those character backgrounds to flesh out the world. I discovered the Skycrag Mountains, courtesy of Beckie's winged folk cleric; my barbarian Li'Rath of Forest Holding lived in the Northern Wastes. Leatherwood, my half elven fighter/thief, and Lenox, Gary's female elven alchemist, both hailed from the Amberwood Forest. Nicky's elven child thief Shadow came from a town called Shady Glen.

All in all, I realized that there was a lot of world on Thule, and a lot of different threads on the backside of Thule's tapestry. My job was going to be to pull those threads into a pattern that would hold up under the scrutiny of the people who would play in my game.

At this time, as well, one has to realize that I in no way considered myself to be an "experienced" gamer. I automatically assumed that any other gamers I met knew more about how the game was "supposed" to be played than I did. Jim's conversations literally introduced me to the concept of game theory; before that, I just played and ran games. I consistently felt that I had bitten off more than I could chew by agreeing to run this game. To my credit, however, or perhaps to my foolhardiness, I never once thought of backing down. I often wished I had never agreed, but my pride wouldn't let me simply say "Look, people, I don't know what I'm doing here, so let's call it off." I was getting reports from Jim about how he had talked to several people who were really interested in the idea of a long term, high level campaign and how they were really looking forward to its beginning.

I was really looking forward to inspiration. Finally, it occurred to me: the characters probably know as little about Thule as I do. After all, their people all originally came from "somewhere else." Why don't I run a game in which the purpose lies in discovering the real history of Thule? That way, what I don't know, they don't know...and I can keep one step ahead of them by making it up as I go along. (I had just discovered/invented the gaming wheel.)

Finally the day dawned in which I informed Jim:" I'M READY TO RUN THE GAME!"

He told me who he had lined up to play: himself, Nicky, Jeff Britton, Ruth Harrison, and Robert Barnes. I had been talking to Jim almost since I met him at the first AGS meeting (actually earlier, because we both attended the now defunct local sf club meetings). I knew Jeff and Ruth from the sf club, too, but had never really gotten to know them as well as I knew Jim. And Robert was, at that time, not as well known to me as Jeff and Ruth were. When Jim asked me what kind of characters people should create for the campaign, I blissfully said, "Oh, they'll be playing these characters for a long time, so everyone should come up with their idea of the perfect character.

19 As far as I'm concerned, anything goes. I don't like class and level restrictions anyway." Jim said something like: "Okay, I guess you know what you're doing..."

With that, the Friday night game officially got under way. Part II, which will appear in next issue of MOTIVE, will deal with the shock waves that emerged from my insistence that the players create "any kind of character they want."

I do intend to use names in this chronicle of what has been my longest experience with a continuing campaign. If I poke fun at anyone (forgive me, Jim..you were the first, but you won't be the last), it is not meant maliciously. We all made mistakes (BIG MISTAKES) during the course of the Friday night game. I think those mistakes were/are important to the evolution of our collective gaming expertise. In retrospect, many of the mistakes are laughable. A few were unfortunate. But I intend to be as honest as possible about the development of one of the most important gaming experiences in my life to date.

I hope that readers will not only learn a lot about Thule and its workings (it really has settled down into a very playable world!), but also will take heart from the do's and don'ts that will undoubtedly emerge in these pages.

Incidentally, the Friday night game is still going strong. In nearly five years of play, we have covered about nine months game time (so much for pacing). We have had a high turnover rate, which I gather is not uncommon for long lived campaigns, and many of the original people are no longer involved in the game. I have had my ups and downs about the campaign as well, but just as I was too stubborn to back out of it before I began running it, I am just as determined to see the game through its continual growing pains. I hope you don't mind sharing them with me.

I've exhausted my quota of words (or wordiness) for this issue. I have to point out that after page 7, the dash/underline key on my keyboard died, so I have had to do without my favorite punctuation mark. Hence, the sudden appearance in my submission of "the dot"...which I have found to be an acceptable substitute for the dash, except with regards to hyphenating words.

I will cease and desist from all this verbiage for now, and let the other bossy old fat broad have her say.

......Jackie

Part II: The Other Old Fat Bossy Wailing Broad (did I miss any?) Speaks

Gee, thanks! After a great introduction like that, how can I refuse? We old fat bossy wailing broads seem to have left things a little late this time, which has led to our breaking tradition of having me (the nonwriter writer) go first so my stuff won't seem so crummy after you read the other O.F.B.W.B.'s (who is the writer writer) inspired prose. So, here we are... not only haven't I gotten anything written yet, but I have to put it in after the good stuff, and........ she talked a whole lot!!!!! Unless I severely limit my verbiage, this issue of MOTIVE is gonna look pregnant! She also covered a whole lot of topics. I'm not really sure I can remember all of them..........and now, the computer is not only refusing to make line things (underline, dash), but it keeps winking from being really light to really dark. Something tells me the cats whizzed more than just the keyboard! If anyone out there knows what this all means (not metaphysically, as in why are we here?, but why our computer is doing strange things and how we can return it to its old self), please let us know.

Meanwhile, some acknowledgements and general statements:

1) To Carl Buehler... Thanks for the phone calls and the support.

2) To Bill Gilsdorf... Your name is in my article! Are you feeling maligned yet? Your copy of this page will be on its way to you when I mail this!

3) To Stewart... Thanks for the nice words about Shadowjack. Jack's pretty fond of Knuckles too. Lets find a decent game to play them in!

4) To Pat Buehler... Thanks for the advice about the paper bag/grab bag characters game. Unfortunately, the person in question has recently been given a character to play that is a sexless robot without personal hangups, and simply refused to play the character as written (even though the robot was sentient and self willed, and was a wonderful character). When this person can't play their standard clone, they refuse to play at all, apparently! Sigh!

5) To All those nice people who continue to write mailing comments about our articles, thank you for the input. Your checks are in the mail, honest!

6) I think I have found a substitute for the dash (see entry under Cats: New Wave Computer Design). I'm testing it now: = oh darn! that was an equal sign. Well, how about this one? ~~~ hmmmm! A little high for a career as a dash, but it can probably be used in place of underlining if we want to take the time to go back over everything we write from one line down and add it!

So, enough fooling around. That page is done, and I am now free to get to the actual article. Gee, I kind of wish Jackie (see entry under O.O.F.B.W.B.) had left me something to comment on. Weellll, here goes nothing............
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^ see, it works (sort of).

Since I really have relatively little time to do this and had better keep it somewhat short, I think that rather than discussing things in depth, I'll simply make a few observations/additions to/corrections of Jackie's article.

THINGS JACKIE NEVER KNEW/WOULDN'T SAY IN PRINT OR FORGOT
(and other equally obnoxious random musings)

1. COMPETITION IN GAMING: Mostly I agree with what Jackie said about all the
~~~~~~~~~~~ ~~ ~~~~~~
reasons for playing in tournaments. On the down side, I had more than my share of bad experiences this year at GEN CON both in tournaments and out of them. What I mean to say is, not only was there a problem in the tournaments, but in talking to some of the people who belong to a different RPGA (TM) club than we do. I found that some of them were ONLY interested in winning, and they were especially interested in winning if it meant they trashed some other players they didn't like. To me, one of the main points about going to cons and being in tournaments is to meet neat people who like to game. The person who wanted to trash the other clubs was someone with whom I had gamed the day before, and was someone who had seemed like one of those people I'd like to get to know better, but after that comment (which was stated with a viciousness I found not only surprising, but disturbing), I decided I really didn't want to know any more about this person (or that particular RPGA club).

Like Jackie, I DO like to win, but for me, it is because winning is almost a validation of how I play. I am passionately concerned with how I play the characters I am given (probably due to that degree in Drama). I try to really get into the psychology, the feelings, the goals, the whole persona of the character. I try not to fall back on "tricks" or easy surface playing, and I am sometimes more successful than at other times. It makes me feel good to know that the DM and other players thought I played the character well, and it hurts when I thought I played really well and I don't win... especially if the person who DID win played a really shallow, facile or slick version of the character, or worse yet, failed to play the character AS WRITTEN (either because they were incapable of doing so, or for the more insidious reason that they thought the character was too boring , quiet, secondary, unneccessary, etc to win with... and believe me, I've heard more players use that excuse for NOT playing their character than I care to remember). I have LOST more tournaments for going ahead and playing the character as written (especially the ones that are inflicted with charisma of 7 or below... apparently people tend to think it is the PLAYER that is obnoxious rather than the character <ulp! Hope they're wrong.>).

My last thought on competitive gaming is that no tournament I have played in has given me as much pleasure or put me through the emotional wringer as much as Joey Masdon's Invitational which he runs each year at Magnum Opus Con. I have played harder, given more, cared more, and felt closer to the other players (and their characters) than in any game in which I had the potential to win something. Kind of makes you wonder what we mean by "winning".

So, I lied. One more note on tournament gaming... Jackie was being very kind when she talked about our first experience in playing in an RPGA (TM) tournament. What she didn't tell you is that I was at the same table, and I didn't even make alternate!!!!! (See entry under characters with charisma 7 or less for possible reason why)!!!!! Anyway, I was really angry that someone who I thought played LOUSY advanced, and I ascribed all sorts of reasons to it: I had a nasty character, we were women, the DM didn't know us, but did know some of the other people at the table, etc. etc. I will probably never know table is a gamer that I have never since liked, that I have heard from many, many sources always votes himself first and tries to skew the voting in his favor, and whom to this day, I refuse to sit down at a table to game with if I have ANY choice in the matter (yes, by now, we all know I'm vindictive <as well as fat, old, bossy,etc>, now we know I have a LONG memory as well).

2. WOMEN AND GAMING: Well, I DO have trouble with being called "she" when I play male characters, and I actually play more male characters than female ones. "Why?" You conveniently ask. When we first started gaming, we didn't really know a lot about feminism... it hadn't really been invented in a big way (boy, this sure dates us, even if all the talk about OLD fat broads didn't), so the Heroic ideals were all male. Just sort of seemed natural at the time that the heroes would be male. Later, as you may have noticed, we tended to end up in groups with lots of women (most ...MOST? who am I kidding? ALL of whom were at least 10 years younger and had been brought up with feminism as a firmly entrenched philosophy... not to mention a lot more female role model heroine types). Most of these women wanted to play female characters, and to keep some sort of party balance, I ended up playing lots of male characters. After all, I'd had lots of practice at it, and it was fun too! In general, I have found that my male characters tend to be nicer, more sensitive to others' feelings, more protective, and much more likely to get away with malarkey and rakish behavior. It always seems like the female characters I play end up being bitches (type casting, I guess).

In between my first experiences as a gamer and these later Amazonathons, I had the misfortune to play with at least a few jerks who consistently hit on (i.e. constantly bothered, attempted to force sex on, made crude remarks about and in general made life hell for) the few female characters I DID play! I decided I really didn't need that kind of s.h.*.t., so I played males. At least that way, if they continued acting like jerks, they were telling all the other players either 1) they're playing gay characters 2) they're such poor role players they can't recognize the sex of other characters or 3) they're incredible jerks!!!!!!! NOT "...manly men doing what comes naturally..." (Insert jungle grunt).

As to who brings what and cleans up when... if yo in mah house, you gets yo own drink or you duzz widout! My momma didn't raise no maids ...... or doormats!

3. THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE FRIDAY NIGHT GAME: Gee, this one is tough! I guess in most particulars Jackie is the one to try to tell all concerning Thule. My comments are as follows:

A) I keep laughing about the idea of "a lot of different threads on the BACKSIDE (see entry under Ass) of Thule's tapestry" A typo which deserves to remain for its enjoyment value.

B) I remember spending a lot of time LISTENING while Jim and Jackie talked about lots of stuff. This was during my mysterious Scorpio phase, and no mysterious Scorpio worth her salt would actually converse for any length of time!

C) Barovia, eh? Heh, heh. Having since purchased Ravenloft II and the new Ravenloft horror series, I've got news for Jackie that should have her quaking in her boots!!! No fair telling her, you guys!

D) Gee, I liked the idea of the perfect character so much that I made up TWO of them (poor Jackie. Some day she must learn the word "no".).

4. THE PROMISED BEGINNING OF MY INFORMATION ABOUT MY A D & D WORLD: So get over it, I told you I was pressed for time. Maybe next time, maybe not.

The Gaming Spouse

by: Pat & Carl Buehler
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/***************************************************************/
/* His Introduction:                                           */
/***************************************************************/
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Included in this issue of "The Gaming Spouse" are mailing comments, Sea Giants, and some Champions gadgets to fill out this 'zine to a full 6 pages.

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/***************************************************************/
/* His Feedback on Issue 3:                                    */
/***************************************************************/
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Once again the Motive deadline draws ever closer and my stomach tightens as I sit contemplating what to type next. It is clear to me that some may misconstrue honest opinion and sheer terror in the face of the 15th day of an odd numbered month for callous disregard for the merit of their material... or worse. Though my wit be biting and my comments be brusque I beseech thee to assume my intentions are good. I wish only to let thee see thy material verily through mine own eyes. I pray that thee see fit to do the same for me. How else can I hope to better the style, form, and content of my writings? Some say mailing comments are best communicated outside of this forum. I say nay to this belief for I value public dialog on my efforts. I too say nay to the incestuous growth of mailing comments so I endeavor to keep my comments short and to the point. Take heed, however, if thee seek a bogey monster within the following lines thee is going to find one even if 'tis only an imagined one. Certainly the human mind is capable of generating fiendish apparitions far more dreadful than reality. Don't you agree?

* Amperion's Thoughts

Mike, I look forward to hearing more about the Castle of Death. Just reading the teaser made me wax nostalgic.

* Fishy Bits

Crab, how does a busy person like you find the time to come up with intricate and logical plot detail between each session? Inquiring minds want to know. Also, kudos to the creator(s) of the campaign play aids (notes, books, etc.). They're neat. I only wish I could whip this kind of stuff out.

Frog, it seems that we have a similar distaste for the "quest for experience" nature of many games. My current opinion as a GM is that experience allows players to develop their characters' abilities rather than their lives. Of course as a player I occasionally find myself with a case of "experience frenzy" against my better judgement. Old urges are hard to tame.

* Druid's Cauldron and Witch's Brew

Once again a thought provoking 'zine which left me depressed. How about an upbeat column for a change of pace?

Nicky, unfortunately the realities of gaming are less than ideal. I too have been frustrated by the situations which you describe and have frustrated others in similar situations. In fact at GenCon in 1989 I "fell out" of many of the games I played in because they were A) run by idiots, B) played by idiots (not necessarily excluding myself), C) written by idiots, D) written for idiots, or E) all of the above. Since then I have lowered my standards rather than raised my blood pressure. Clearly the RPGA classification of a given session as Masters, Grand Masters, etc. is not the best indication of how much fun a given game session will be. Far more important are the factors A-E. In particular factor A stands out in my book as the most important. A GM who is good at directing the action in a scenario to ensure that each player is participating and having a good time can minimize the impact of factors B-D even if the GM is not a particularly good roleplayer, tactician, or even rules arbiter. In fact I believe this so strongly that I make it a point of honor to keep every player involved in each play session I run. I wish all GMs did the same.

Jackie, I like Frank Mentzer's attitude. It's too bad that it does not prevail within the RPGA. I believe that roleplaying, melodramatics, etc. have always been over emphasized in RPGA tournaments from the way they are written (especially the characters) to the way they are run and played. Unfortunately its no fun to be a salmon (goal oriented player) in a group of hogs (role playing hams). That's why this salmon keeps a "pig" suit handy especially when he plays in the Midwest.

* Hemispheres

AJ, I liked your piece "Wheels Within Wheels" because I am once again trying my hand at running a campaign and I need all the help I can get as I am primarily a player and tournament GM.

In response to your questions... 1) Yes I play wargames, 2a) My favorites are Imperium, Samurai, Axis & Allies, Titan, Nuclear War, Modern Naval Battles, Naval War, Star Fleet Battles, and Champions, 2b) I only play wargames occasionally, 3) I have played Diplomacy and Civilization but neither game particularly appeals to me.

"The Indirect Approach" is interesting but I find it difficult to employ in most games because they do not simulate the "fog of war". It is really hard to out fox an opponent who always knows the disposition of all the combatants in the game.

* Tail of the Monkey Man

Once again Sersus clearly speaks with the voice of experience. Does anyone see a resemblance between the Atlanta Police Chief and either Khadaffi or Noriega? Hmm... Maybe the Minutemen have another adventure on their hands.

The Gaming Spouse

* White Noise

JDM, which edition of Champions did you design your Cthulhu Creatures with? If you used the third edition then the critters' extra limbs are equivalent to OCV levels with HTH attacks and therefore the Minor & Miniscule Star-Spawn need fewer levels. Clearly the Major Star-Spawn and Shoggoth do not need levels because they have area of effect attacks. The combination of good defenses, damage reduction, and healing that is always on is real nasty. Cosmic VPPs are nasty too. Any PC who runs into one of these guys should be thankful that the creatures each have at least 3d6 of Unluck.

In regards to the Mythos Mind Control, have you considered a cumulative transformation attack instead? A transformation attack will allow you to add psychological limitations to characters. If you add a +2 advantage to the transform so that it only heals at a limited rate and only if you are in therapy then you're really in business.

Finally, I recognized "Little Lucy Muffin Tail" right away. Anyone reading this who has not seen Dynaman should make an effort to do so. It's great.

* Tales of the Brass Monkey

Thanks for reprinting Master Magic.

* Secrets of Vulcan Poetry Revealed

Deena, I recently started watching Twin Peeks and it is bizarre. I can't wait to run a Zen FBI agent in a game and Albert's a guy right after my own heart. How did you write up the chili-corn dog attack?

Keith, I found the origin of Commander Comet quite entertaining. Particularly the speed testing experiments. Upon taking a closer look at Comet's character sheet I noticed that he has life support usable on up to 4 others but that his flight is only personal. It would be cool to have a character who can serve as a space shuttle.

* The Blue View

Peter, I liked your piece about Faerie and the Freshman was refreshing once again.

* The Snake of Forever

Greg, being a gamer rather than a writer I'll leave the comments on your story to Pat who is the writer to be in this household.

* Recently Unearthed

Robert, glad to have you aboard. I just don't have the heart to play T2000 now that the Berlin Wall has come down so I only browsed through your scenario. PCs looking for nuclear devices sounds dangerous.

* The Game is A-Foot

You have a copy of "General Lee and the Turtle Boats of Doom"? I've been looking for that for years.

* Death to All Fanatics

Null, Knuckles is co...ol. I must say that I would rather have him shoot me than pistol whip me.

Void, psi - only one more installment of "A Joker in the Matrix" to go. How about some NPC write ups to keep the feeling going. Concerning the Database, rumor has it that the RPGA is going to resurrect it's membership directory. Time will tell.

* Cyber Tonto

John, another show off with a Mac? Nice character sheets.

* Column in Search of...

Darrell, seeing your campaign lingo makes me want to write up some for my recently started campaign but I'm probably too busy and/or too lazy to do it. The name Kowalski really give me the creeps. The last year I was in NROTC our drill sergeant was named Kowalski. Talk about crazy. He was an officer in an ARMY recon unit but decided that the ARMY wasn't tough enough to suit him so he joined the Marines... as an enlisted man.

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/***************************************************************/
/* Her Sea Giants for AD&D:                                    */
/***************************************************************/
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I finally found/unpacked those Sea Giants I promised a couple of issues ago. (They were in a bottom box, naturally)....

Sea Giants

Frequency: Rare
Climate/Terrain: Temperate - Tropical Salt water
Organization: Villages
Activity Cycle: Any (primarily day)
Diet: Large Sea Life, occasional land animals
Intelligence: Genius (5-18)
Treasure: Individuals M x 5, Q, and 35% chance of any 1 magic stabbing weapon plus 1 other magic item. E in lair.
Alignment: LN
No. Appearing: 1-100
Armor Class: -1
Move: (9") 12"/18" (swimming)
Hit Dice: 15-20 (14 + 1D6)
THAC0: 8
No. of Attacks: 1 or 2 (see below)
Damage/Attack: Special, or by weapon type
Special attacks: See below
Special defenses: See below, impervious to water attacks
Magic Resistance: Standard
Size: H (15' to 20' tall)

Sea Giants rarely emerge into the world of air. When they do, they appear stooped, with hair made of greenish or bluish water. (Under water they appear bald to human eyes.) They find it difficult to lumber about in the world of air, where buoyant water does not help to support their weight. They cannot breathe air without magical assistance, and while on land, they move at 9" and suffer penalties identical to those suffered by normal humans under water. Their chance to hit is at -1 out of water.

Under water Sea Giants truly live up to their names. They walk along the sea bottom at 12", or they swim with their webbed hands and feet at 18". They attack with various stabbing weapons twice per round, or use one of two special attacks once per round. Once per day, Sea Giants can cause instantaneous flash-boiling of water which has an area & damage equal to a six-dice fireball. (Save vs breath yields half damage.) Seventy percent of the Sea Giants also carry a special tube which will propel any sharp, streamlined object at a target harpoon-style. The Giants usually use long, narrow cone-shaped ammunition (3-24 in number) which does 2-5/2-7 points of damage. The cones are sometimes enchanted in ways similar to the enchantments used by humans on arrows. The firing range of these tubes is 3/7/10 (S/M/L). Unfortunately, the tubes are made of a mysterious substance which is hard while submerged, but is of a dough-like consistency when exposed to air, rendering the tubes useless on dry land.

Sea Giants usually navigate by sonar AND sight. Loss of sight or hearing causes them a penalty of -1 on 'to hit' rolls. Communication over long distances is accomplished by use of loud underwater "songs" similar to those done by whales. Some believe they can talk to whales, and it is rumored that whales and other large sea life are often coaxed into acting as beasts of burden for the Sea Giants.

/***/
/* His Champions Gadgets to Fill the Last Page and a Half: */
/***/

Here are a few items I designed for my Cyber Ninja Fantasy Hero campaign which I started in late October.

A) Satori Spitting Cobra Ceramic Air Pistol
- OAF
- Independent

04 * -6 to be detected by unusual senses.
01 * +1 OCV & +1 Range Mod for Laser Sight. (C4, p.199)
07 * 30 point multipower.
01 u Ceramic Needles
1d6 Physical RKA
Penetrating
5 shot Autofire
2x 12 shot clips
01 u Crystallized Poison Needles
1d6 Recovery Drain
Not vs. Resistant Defenses.
Returns at Rate of 1 Active Point per Hour
Invisible to Hearing Sense Group
5 shot Autofire

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         2x 12 shot clips
01     u Rubber Bullets
         4d6 Physical Energy Blast
         5 shot Autofire
         2x 12 shot clips
---
 15

B)     Satori Razor Fan
       - IAF
       - Independent
03     * 12 point multipower
01     u Blunt strike with Fan
         3d6 HA
         0 end
01     u Razor strike with Fan
         1/2d6 HKA
         0 end
04     * Strike with Poison Spines
         1d6 NND
         Defense is Resistant Physical Defense
         5 shot autofire
         No Range
         Damage done at the rate of 1d6 per segment rather than
           all at once (+.5 advantage)
         5 end from END Reserve
04     * END Reserve for Poison Spines
         [30 End & 5 REC]
         Recovery only works when poison refill is available
         No IAF or Independent limitations
---
 13

C)     Satori Flash Bang Grenades
       - OAF
       - Independent
       - 4 Charges
09     * 2d6 Sight & Hearing Flash
         Area of Effect 1 Hex
07       2" Radius Darkness Impervious to Sight, lasts 1 turn
---
 16

D)     Satori Poison Gas Grenades
       - OAF
       - Independent
       - 4 continuing charges which last 1 minute
08     * 2d6 END Drain
         Area of Effect 1 Hex
         Returns at Rate of 1 Active Point per Minute
         Not vs. Life Support: Immunity to Airborne Poisons
---
 08
```

TRANSDIMENSIONAL
BLUES

Since last writing for MOTIVE some major writing and concept work has been done for Transdimensional Blues. I have been very pleased to hear from Wayne that there has been a great deal of positive feedback about my article.

Many ideas, while still existing in their basic form, have been rethought and expanded. In this installment I would like to concentrate on some details of the events following the Warps; especiallly in North America. I will also talk about the various aliens, vulgarly called "xenos" represented in the area of the Ohio Military District and a few other places.

1999-2005 A SEMBLANCE OF ORDER

> "Uh unit twelve, would you repeat your last... uh transmission?"
> "I said, there is what appears to be a tyranosaurus rex inside the building!"
> "Uh...would you repeat, unit twelve?"
> "JESUS, FRANK!! THERE'S A GODDAMN DINOSAUR TEARING UP THE K-MART!! NOW WILL YOU PLEASE SEND ME SOME BACKUP!!"
>
> \- Recorded transmission of a police unit investigating a warp in Elmer, New Jersey

The years immediately following the Warps were relatively orderly considering the social unrest caused by the shock of the Warps and the ensuing spread of plague and famine. Several virulent plagues struck down both human and alien populations; a situation similar to when the Europeans contacted the Native Americans, but much worse. Through means of martial law, the United States and other strong world governments kept their populations under control. The major disturbances in the US were in the Mid-West where many farmers displaced by Federal-backed Agricultural Corporations began following white-supremacist groups. Terrorist activity was active in these areas. In urban areas, rioting was a common problem due to shortages of food and decent medical care. But by 2004 , the situation was improving. Most of the alien populations were in detainment centers. The situation might have righted itself but for the promised fossil-fuel shortage that hit in 2005.

2005-2019 THE CIVIL WARS

> "White men are the true Israelite inheritiors of the covenant with God. America is their promised land. Jews are the descendents of a Mongolian tribe; children of Cain; and worshipperes of the Antichrist. Hispanics and Blacks are mongrel subhumans. Xenos are pure and simply servants of the Devil."

- Propoganda leaflet distributed by the White American Revolutionary Army

With the shortage of fossil-fuels society everywhere began to break down. Prices skyrocketed. Hoarding, black-marketeering, and speculation became rampant, with many of the worst abuses carried out by the representatives of the military government. Troops from all over the world rushed to the Middle-east to secure the remaining oil fields; overrunning the governments of the countries that owned them. Conflicts flared daily.

In the US, the major oil companies, which owned the contracts to research in the field of alternative power-sources, found themselves in powerful positions. The Fission-Authority was formed in 2007, with major posts going to representaives from the oil companies. Much of the major grain-producing land was forcibly seized and turned over to the newly merged Exxon-Agroplex Corporation for the production of alchohol-fuels. It was this move that started the first so-called "civil wars" of the era. Since 2003, representatives of the state governments in many of the Mid-western states were also associated with white-supremacist groups. On September 10, 2007; a coalition of these states seceded and declared war on the US. While the majority of the citizenry cannot be said to have openly supported this move, neither did they oppose it. The rebels found a great deal of support in the paramilitary organizations that the government had helped to arm and organize immediately after the Warps. In the past few years, the Federal government had been pressuring many of them to disband.

The Aryan Insurrection, as these events were called, seemed to be the signal nation-wide for open revolt against the Federal government. With much of their military might in the Middle-east, the government fared poorly. The civil wars made the energy crisis worsen which in turn made matters even worse. Plague and famine ruled the land as much as any government. The US tore itself apart year by year. In 2013, the Confederate Aryan Nations declared their existence in parts of what were once Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa, Arkansas, and South Dakota. In 2014 the US government lost a conflict with an alien population. The race called, Demons; inhabiting the Reachers Mountains which had warped into western Ohio, invaded that state and the peninsula between Lake Erie and Lake Huron. Apparently, this invasion was the result of some disagreement between rival traditionalist and liberal factions of the Demon population. While lacking a sizeable army, the Demons do possess the ability to alter reality around them. In Ohio, a coalition of rebellious military commanders managed to stop the Demon army at Cleveland. In 2016, the military government in Texas invaded Mexico to try and stop a socialist rebellion in that country. The attempt was a dismal failure and only served to increase friction between the two areas. Rebellious factions in the south-west warred with each other as well as with federal troops. What was left of the United States; mainly the East and West Coast as well as Texas, found itself with a government whose policy was dictated mainly by representatives put forward by corporate lobbying groups.

2006-2014 THE MIDDLE-EAST CRISIS

"Johnson...confirm please. Is armor column hostile or friendly?"
"Well sir, the markings definately aren't cyrillic. The lead tank's a T-74, so it must be Soviet Georgian...no, wait. The Syrians sold some T-74s to the Iraqis before the war started... Your guess is as good as mine, sir."
"Aw...hell son. Just open fire. If they're Russian God'll sort 'em out."

- Transmission between US forces during the Middle-eastern Crisis

The Middle-east Crisis began in 2006 with the invasion of Iran by armed forces of the Soviet Confederation. The move was made to secure precious oil-fields in the face of major shortages. Iraq independently followed suit, coming into conflict with Soviet as well as Iranian troops.This prompted an invasion of Iraq by the Soviets. At the request of the Saudi government, Britain, Germany, and the United States began sending troops to that country. Before a sizeable force could be gathered, Iraq invaded Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Two months into the crisis,, a revolt began in Soviet Georgia. This resulted in a mutiny by Georgian troops among the Soviet forces. Syria further complicated matters by coming into the conflict as an independent interest. What resulted was a confused struggle involving open and somewhat indescriminate conflict on several different fronts. In 2010, China invaded Siberia and the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic, forcing the Soviet government to withdraw their troops from the Middle-east. In the latter part of the conflict supply lines had broken down to the point where brigandige was a common accusation made of all forces involved. By the close of 2014, all foreign powers involved had withdrawn their troops from the Middle-east. The conflict itself had stirred up turmoil in most moslem countries that was to last until it flared into open rebellion in the twenties.

2020-2034 GATHERING THE REMAINS

"The situation being as it is, I see no other choice but to redefine the organization of the United States of America."

- Senator Neal Donnell, calling for a Second Constitutional Congress. March 2, 2034

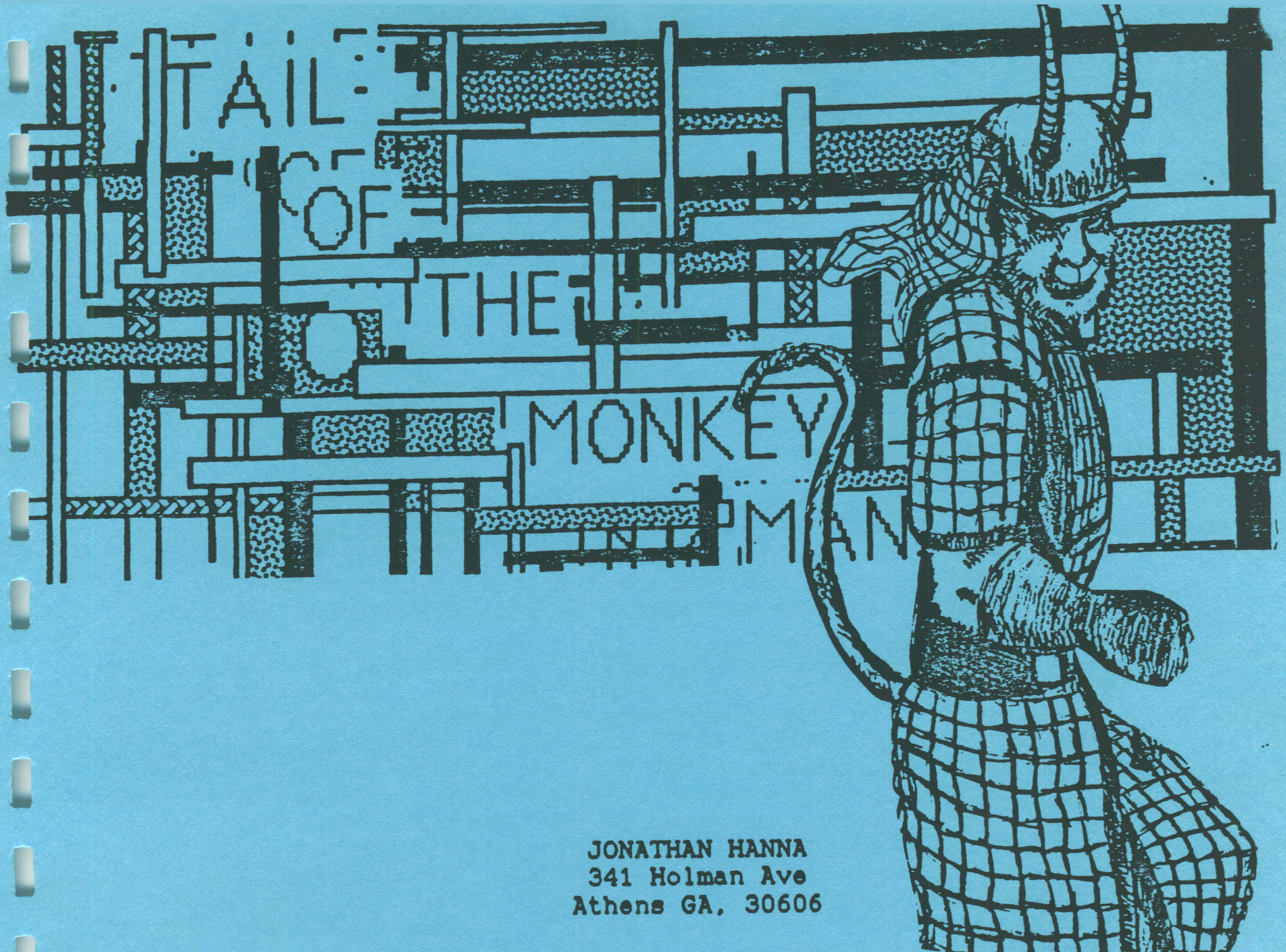
The period from 2020-2034 was a mixture of good and bad for the US as well as its rebellious territories. The urban centers found themselves prey to the rising seas. Renewal and defenses, such as sea-walls, were a massive drain on the economy in this period. The urban populations, already swollen with refugees from the rebellious states were further increased by those fleeing the encroaching waters. The US had lost much of its food producing lands in the Civil Wars and was forced to rely on expensive imports from Europe and Argentina. This period and the relationships the remaining states formed with foreign powers were instrumental in events that were to occur years later. In any case, the economy of the US; already in dire straits; was in danger of total collapse. In the fall of 2034 the Second Constitional Congress met to restructure the United States of America and hopefully provide some means of reconstruction.

I will now leave the hiastory lesson to discuss some of the alien species existing in the TDBs world. The names given to most of the races are exactly that; names given by the humans who first encountered them. In most cases the names have stuck. In listing them the common name occurs in quotes, followed by the races name for themselves.

"Dwarves" Kazakharum. A primitive, burrowing specie. Physically they are a sqaut humanoid race having dark brown, leathery skin and wide, sharp facial features. Their limbs are short and thick. They tend to be nocturnal, dwelling in underground areas. Their society is clannish and formal in its traditional form. They had advanced to a period roughly equal with our bronze age when the warp hit their world and deposited them in the Catskill Mts. They were quickly gathered and contained by military forces. The second generation was educated in the detention camps and while not allowed citizenship until 2037, were allowed to take up residence in urban areas. Like most humans of the time and immigrants before them they moved to urban areas. The majority settled in the poorer sections of New York City. A large number chose to leave with the resettlement programs in the '30s for a life in the Military Districts. In New York they had been the focus of dicrimination and often violent racism; most notably the Plague Riots of '35. Of all the aliens in the US, the Kazakharum have assimilated the best to accepted culture. Some even hold high-ranking positions in a number of corporations.

"Nekojin" Ftal'irakh! An advanced specie technologically. Nekojin resemble humanoid felines more than anything else. They vary widely in size and fur color; such features having some relation to social position in their society. Size ranges from one to two meters in height; the larger ones being laborers and soldiers. The smaller varieties make up the technicians and more specialized laborers. Division is fairly specific based on fur color and markings within these two groups. The truly advanced knack the specie had as far as technology is concerned is in genetic engineering. Their warp deposited a fairly large population in Japan. At first they were harshly detained until their talent was discovered. From there they were granted positions in many of the zaibatsu, or major corporations. Most of the advances in cloning and trait selectioncan be credited to Nekojin researchers. Their work with biopolymers made possible many of the strong, light industrial materials we possess today. The polyceramic armor invented by John Deere Odetics and used on most armored vehicles today owes itself to this work. Nekojin engineers for Genentech-Koso Corporation developed the serum for Aids I. Many other drugs, such as the immuno-suppresives which prevent rejection trauma for many transplanted organs, were the work of Nekojin engineers. Many Nekojin came as workers to the West Coast Republics when those states became members in the Japanese Defense Pact. From there, a few have spread out over North America.

"Buthis" A short humanoid specie somewhat resembling bluish-white tapirs with a snout ending in two wide nostrils. They tend to be rather stout. They have always tried to keep to themselves and for the most part live in a few isolated villages in the hills of south-eastern Ohio. They make their living by simple farming. As the corporations have oened up their food markets to the more isolated areas of the Ohio Military District, the Buthis have taken to growing opium as a cash crop. They sell the raw opium to the drug lords residing in the hills of Kentucky. They also increasingly find their land used as a highway by anti-government insurgents moving arms and supplies.



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Author's Disclaimer: I hereby take no responsibility for any misspellings, grammatical errors, or mistakes of any kind in this document. I am merely the vessel through which a greater force is writing this paper. Any mistakes are therefore solely the product of that twisted and maladjusted mind. Similarly, if anyone is offended by the ideas brought forth in this paper, remember, you could have flipped the page at any time. No one forced you to read it. I will, however, take any and all credit for the parts you like.

Issue Four Includes:

1. They're delicious. They're delightful. They're de-mailing comments.
2. Finally, the full write up on the master of that "Funky Mystical Shit", Bloodstone.
3. So, just what is this stuff that is magic, and how does it effect Edge? Hell, do you really think that Sersus knows? Well, he's going to give it his best shot.

THOSE PESKY MAILING COMMENTS

First off, I want to praise everyone associated with Motive on issue 3. I think that this thing is really starting to hit it's stride. Everyone seems to be getting comfortable with their various columns, as well as their various computers, typewriters or whatever. Congratulations to all. Now to the specifics.

COVER - Wow!! And I mean that.

AMPERION'S THOUGHTS - Hey hey Mike, good going. I didn't know you had it in you. 16 pages. Great! Yorikk looks to be the finest Aesir of our time.

FISHY BITS - Whoa, talk about characters who lose their grip. "Make me a sandwich"? This scenario must have been a blast to play in. Only in Call of Cthulhu could the characters have self-destructed in such a gloriously stupid fashion, and still consider the whole scenario a complete success, which I'm sure they did.

DRUIDS CAULDRON/WITCHES BREW - Personally, I much prefer games in which there are no strict classes. In Champions, for instance, all the characters are custom made by the player. If you want your character to be able to do something, then you pay the points, and he/she can do it. A variant in the Rolemaster game I'm playing in is also similar to this. Instead of using a specific profession's costs to pay for your skills, everyone pays points on the No Class profession list. This means that any skill is going to cost the same for all the players. This also means that people can make individuals, instead of "Fighters", or "Magic Users". I really became unhappy with the strict restrictions on a player's abilities due to whatever class he was when I only played D&D.

THE GAMING SPOUSE - Muskie is fantastic. That goes for both the character and the drawing. I've always had a soft spot for big, strong, walking fish.

HEMISPHERES - Welcome back AJ. I agree with your GM philosophy regarding steering the players towards a predetermined time and place. Unfortunately, in the only game I ever GM for, Champions, this is pretty much a necessity. Given the way that we have set up The Minutemen campaign, with the multiple GM approach, there can't be very many plot lines that don't get fleshed out in one or maybe two sittings.

WHITE NOISE - Jon, I can guarantee that one movie that will never be made is "Jake Maserati meets the Major Star-Spawn from hell" I get the willies just thinking about it.

TALES OF THE BRASS MONKEY - It's good to see Master Magic, Paul. He needs to make an appearance with The Minutemen. I can't wait until he meets Daemon.

SECRETS OF VULCAN POETRY REVEALED - Hey Keith, did you notice that both Commander Comet and Comrade Amerika have the same first and middle names? Sort of makes you wonder doesn't it? Perhaps there is more to those two than meets the eye. Hmmmm. Deena, it 's going to be interesting reading your Gender and Gaming column. Part of whatever problem there may be, assuming that there is a problem, is that there are so many more male gamers than female gamers. This has been the case with the groups I've played in, anyway. What we need are more gaming women.

THE BLUE VIEW - My God! I was sitting here reading this when suddenly it hit me like a ton of moldy manure. Peter, you didn't write anything that I disagree with!! Aarrgghh!! What am I going to write about in my mailing comments!! No! No! The horror!!!

THE SNAKE OF FOREVER - Keep it up, the story's looking good.

RECENTLY UNEARTHED - It's good to see a new name here. I like your title and title layout. This gives the guys at Death To All Fanatics a challenge in the title graphics department. I've never played Twilight 2000, but this looks interesting.

THE GAME IS A-FOOT - I agree with your mailing comments comment completely. In addition, I agree with your observations regarding simple vs complex systems. All in all, it was a truly agreeable issue.

DEATH TO ALL FANATICS - Knuckles Red McGee is magnificent. I would (milieu) really like to play in a (milieu) game involving him some day. I just (milieu) hope that people don't get the (milieu) impression that Motive is strictly (milieu) an APA for simians. Mind Games (milieu) is great. I'll be (milieu) sitting on the edge of my (milieu) seat waiting to see how the PC's work things (milieu) out. What the hell does that last page mean?

CYBERTONTO - More fresh meat. Good, good. A new Champions character sheet could be an asset to many of the Motive members.

COLUMN IN SEARCH OF A CLEVER HEADING - Hello Darrell. Your image of Stronghold is interesting and well thought out. I hope that Stewart didn't give you too much trouble when you ran this game. He can be such hell to run things for. If I ever run a Minuteman game set at stronghold, I will use the SGC suit - MK 1. PS, did you notice that you were placed at the butt end of issue three? Hmmmm.

RAMBLINGS: MULTIPLE GM'S

I heard that some people were going to write on multiple GMing, so I decided to write something. The multiple GM aspect that I personally have experience with is the "Shared World" concept of running Champions. Most everybody playing in the game takes their turn in running a scenario at some time or another. The advantages of this system are that everyone involved in the game will have some input as to the direction the game takes. They will also get to play in the games, and not just GM, which is what many people get stuck with most of the time. Also, everybody gets a great idea of what the various characters are really all about, because they have to run things for them. The disadvantages are that you can never really do anything drastic or world changing, because that could screw up some of the other's plans. Also, you can't really ever have a scenario which lasts for more than a few sessions, because other people will have their own things that they want to run. I personally like this system for The Minutemen, due to the variety of scenarios. For games which are run like individual comic book plots, it works very well.I don't think it would work as well for a fantasy setting, because those games usually revolve more around the "Great Quest" type of continuing scenarios.

JON'S PAGE O' HEROES
CHARACTERS FOR
CHAMPIONS

BLOODSTONE

BACKGROUND: Adam Peterson was born on September 7, 1952 in Atlanta Georgia. His father and mother both worked for the Atlanta phone company, and his childhood was rather nice and boring. Adam was always interested in airplanes and jets, and at an early age he decided that he wanted to be a pilot. When he turned 18, Adam enlisted in the Air force and headed out to the Air force academy in Boulder Colorado. He attended the school on a full scholarship, and went straight into the pilot's training program. Adam graduated at the top of his class as a Captain in the Air force, with his choice of assignments any where in the world. Ready to serve his country, Adam chose to be sent to Saudi Arabia which was close to Iran, the hot spot of the world at the time.

On his first mission Captain Peterson was sent along with two other fighters to fly as an escort for the Shah of Iran. The flight was to take them from Saudi Arabia to China, crossing the Arabian sea and India. The flight was uneventful until they were crossing somewhere above the Himalayas. The group of four planes was attacked by a swarm of unmarked fighters. Peterson managed to shoot down five planes and chase off the last two, but only after a bullet had severed his fuel line. The Shah's plane safely made it to China, but Adam's plane soon started descending towards the cloud encrusted peaks below. Captain Peterson and his co-pilot tried to bail out, but he found that his ejector control had been damaged in the battle. The last anyone saw of Adam Peterson was as his plane dipped beneath the clouds towards the jagged cliffs below. Captain Peterson was the only american to be awarded the Iranian medal of honor, given by the Shah at a service held for him in Saudi Arabia. The Air force searched for the wreckage of the jet, but they never located it or the bodies of Peterson or his co-pilot.

Peterson's bloody pulp of a body was found by an initiate of the Temple of the East Wind. His co-pilot was dead. Dragging his mangled body from the Wreckage, the initiate took Adam to the temple, where his body was tended by the healers of the East Wind. Adam lay in a coma for the next six months. The members of the East Wind found through mystical means that Adam was a good, pure man, who, when healthy, was strong and intelligent They determined through readings of a magical nature that Adam Peterson was destined to become a great fighter for good. When he awoke from his coma, they repaired his body, and began to train him in their style of martial arts. Sensing that Adam had an aura of true greatness about him, they granted unto him the Bloodstone, a jewel of magical power which could cause great damage, as well as be a means of healing. Adam was given the code name "Bloodstone", and he became an agent for the East Wind. Bloodstone served the temple as an agent for years, during which time he perfected his martial arts skills. He was their most productive field agent. The temple became aware that Bloodstone's greater destiny was to be found elsewhere, so they released him and allowed him to keep the jewel. He was free to go and do as he pleased, but he was expected to aid the East Wind if they called on him. Shortly after this time, the Temple of the East Wind was nearly completely wiped out by agents of the Glass Hand. Bloodstone had fought with the Glass Hand agents before, so they had made sure to keep him occupied while they destroyed the East Wind.

Shortly after the destruction of the East Wind, Bloodstone found himself back in his native Georgia, where he hooked up with some other paranormals and founded Ward Major. Ward Major was secretly backed by the few remnants of the East Wind, and Bloodstone was their direct correspondent to the group. He and his companions, Thew, Harlequin, Daemon, Siren, Lugh, and the other non permanent members of the group fought very successfully against some of the most powerful and evil beings around.

During this time Adam decided to try and do something different besides being a superhero, so he took up acting as a hobby. He made a short appearance in a Jack Clod Von Heck kung-fu movie, but was so amazing in the bit part as a bus boy, that they gave him a contract and signed him to start a series of movies revolving around his character, Jake Maserati. Adam did not want to compromise his secret identity, so his actor name is Peter Adams. He is now contemplating revealing his true identity, but as of yet he has not done so.

Eventually Ward Major broke up. Bloodstone, along with some of the others formed a new group, The Minutemen. Presently Bloodstone is the elected leader of The Minutemen, and they have started fighting criminals and would be world conquerors with a vengeance.

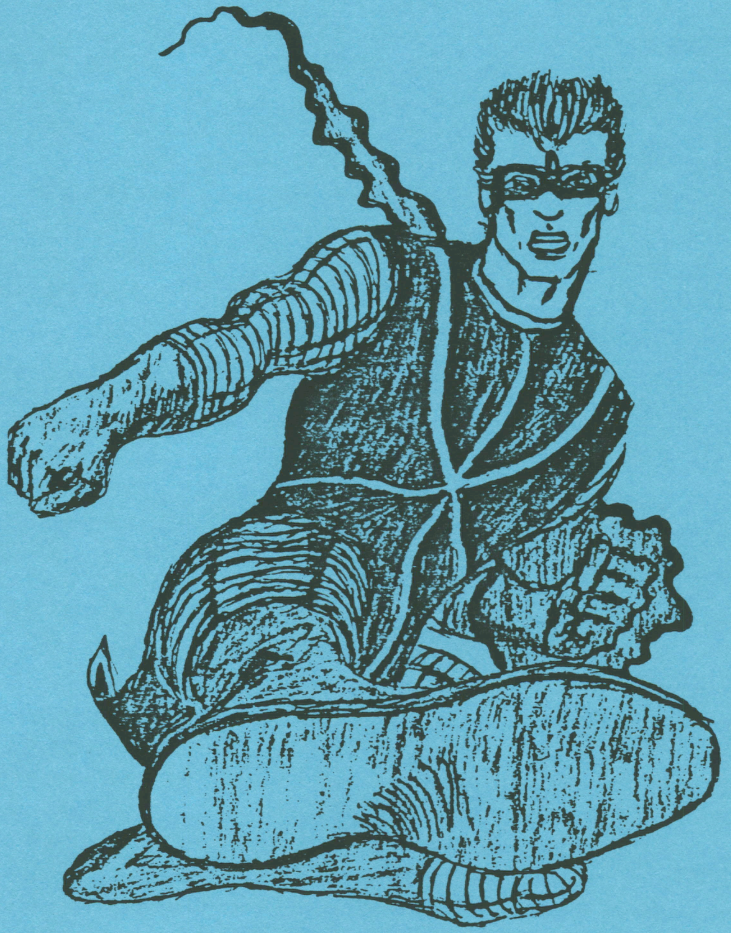
QUOTE: 1- "Man, I really hate interdimensional bullshit!"
2- "By the funky mystical shit of the East Wind, I'm going to kick your sorry butt!"

PERSONALITY: Bloodstone is somewhat brash and to the point. He does know when to behave, however. He is a good guy, and takes his responsibilities seriously. This does not mean that he is always serious, though. He is proud to be associated with the other members of The Minutemen, and is proud of the things that they have accomplished.

POWERS AND TACTICS: Bloodstones powers are pretty straight forward. He is an exceptional martial artist, who has some magic which boosts his damage potential. Even if he lost the Bloodstone, however, he would still be quite effective. His defense comes from, one, not being hit to begin with, and two, the armor he wears. The armor also enhances his running. The Bloodstone can also project a force field if he really needs it, although he has very rarely used it. He has the ability to heal damage done to others via the Bloodstone. This is strictly Body damage, not Stun. Lastly, the Bloodstone can give him a recovery boost if he is low on Stun. By magical means, he has instant change on the costume and the Bloodstone. This means that when he's in normal dress he does not have access to the stone's powers. The Minutemen have developed a few standard combat maneuvers which involve his martial arts. Generally they all attack as solo fighters, but sometimes they will fight as a team.

DRIVING FORCE: Bloodstone feels that it is his responsibility to help people, which is why he joined the Air Force, and why he is a superhero. He also just plain enjoys it.

APPEARANCE: Bloodstone still wears the original armor and costume that he was given as an East Wind agent. The armor is made up of metal bands, while the costume is a purple and red vest kind of thing. he stands 5'11" tall, and weighs 150 pounds without the armor. Due to his prolonged contact with the Bloodstone, he is now much stronger and tougher than a normal man, even if he was to lose the Bloodstone.



IRON FIST RIP-OFF PICTURE

BLOODSTONE

VAL	CHAR	COST
25	STR	15
27	DEX	51
20	CON	20
10	BODY	0
13	INT	3
11	EGO	2
15	PRE	5
18	COM	4
20	PD *	9
20	ED *	9
6	SPD	23
10	REC	2
40	END	0
40	STUN	7

100+	DISADVANTAGES
10	Public ID
10	Hunted: Unknown 8-
10	Obligation: To East Wind
20	Vulnerability: x2 STUN from electrical attack
20	Psych Lim: Enraged when normals endangered
30	Hunted: By Glass Hand 11-
5	Rivalry: With Jack Clod Von Heck

COST	POWERS	END
17	Multipower (30 pt reserve)(-1/2) OIF (-1/4, transform)	
1u	+4D6 damage to HTH attacks, 1/2 END	1
1u	Force Field, (10 PD, 10 ED) 1/2 END	1
2u	Regeneration, 2 BODY usable on others	
2u	+15 Recovery	
5	Instant Change	
6	1/4 Dmg Red PD *	
6	1/4 Dmg Red ED *	
6	Hardened PD/ED *	
14	Damage resistance, Hardened *	
3	5 Power Def *	
3	7 Mental Def *	
11	+ 10" Running = 16" *	3
8	END pool (100 pt Reserve, on all magic END)	

Martial Arts

4	Crush	3	Throw
3	Grab	5	Passing Strike
4	Punch	4	Nerve Strike
3	Leg Sweep	5	Defensive Strike
4	Knife Hand	4	Reversal
4	Dodge		
4	Martial Escape	20	+5 DC

SKILLS AND TALENTS

3	Acrobatics, 14-	3	Breakfall, 14-
3	Stealth, 14-	5	Security Systems, 13-
3	Acting, 12-	3	Contortionist, 14-
3	Combat Pilot, 14-	3	Combat Drive, 14-
2	Mystic Knowledge, 11-	6	Tn. fam. ground, air, space
1	Contact: in Hollywood	2	Fam w/small arms
30	+2 HTH levels, +2 Overall levels		

OCV: 9; DCV: 9; ECV: 4; phases: 2,4,6,8,10,12

COSTS:	Char		Powers		Total		Disadv.		Base		
	150	+	219	=	369	=	105	+	100	+	EXP

* = OIF armor

LIFE IS BESTIAL, AND SO AM I

Thoughts By Sersus, The Monkey Warrior

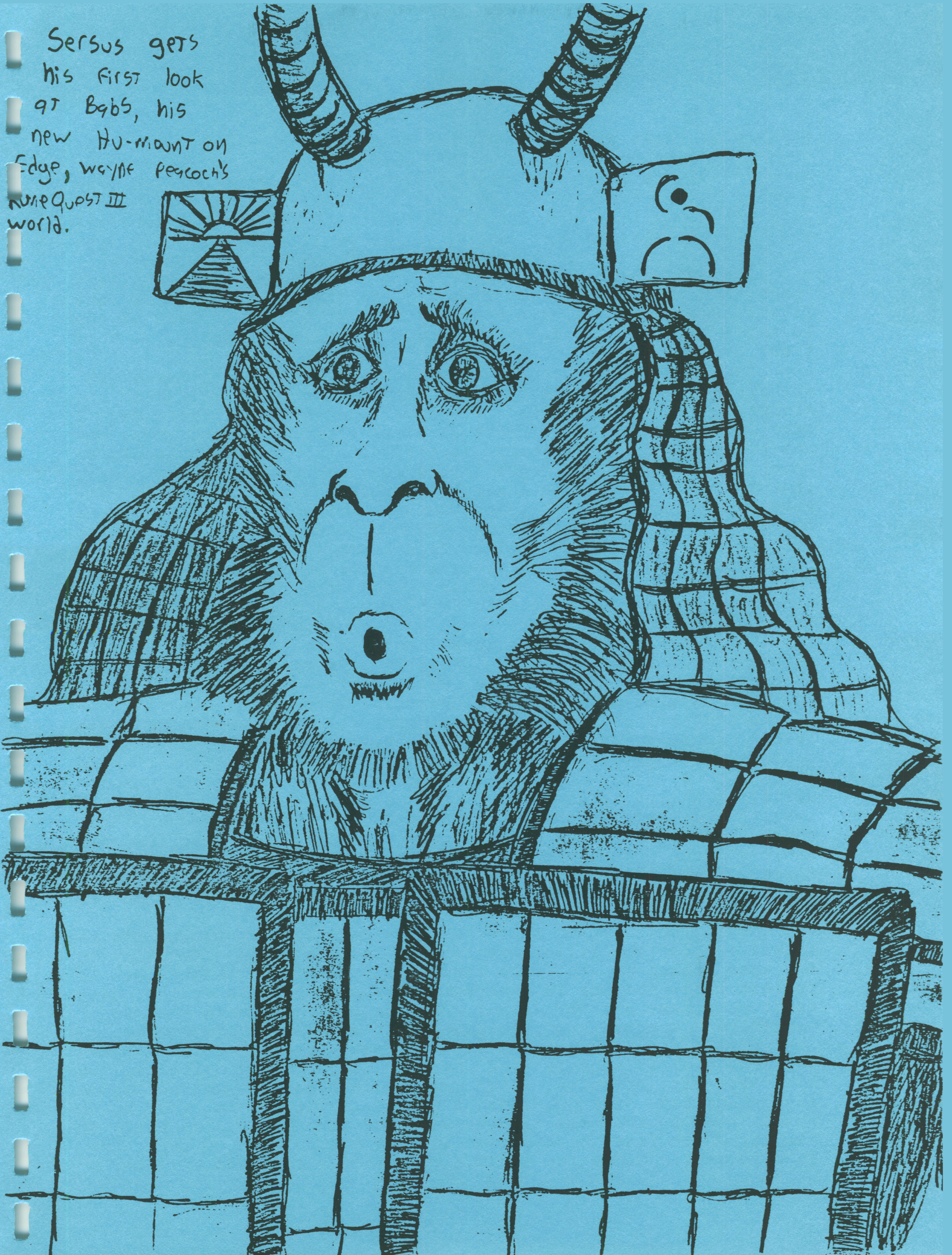
MAGIC AND OTHER SPIRITS

I don't know about you, but when I'm standing there in a struggle for my life, fighting a spirit combat on the Spirit Plane against some huge salivating ugly spirit which is screaming, "swallow your soul! Swallow your soul!", I always think, "Just what the Law is going on? Why am I here? What exactly are these creatures which inhabit the Spirit Plane, and why are they attempting to possess me? What exactly are the ramifications of this? What does this mean?!?!! Well, I don't really know. I do know that there's some weird shit on Edge, and sooner or later you're gonna step in it. Magic is a common and accepted fact on Edge. Just what is this stuff that is magic, and why does it always seem to be fucking with me? Let me give you my opinions.

First off there is spirit magic. This is the stuff that I deal in when I use what little magic I know. As I understand it, there are these spirits, which are kind of these little demon things, if you will, or maybe not demon things but more like just these things which are not really on our world, but live on this other plane called the Spirit Plane. Each of these creatures have specific abilities, spells, and you basically bargain with it to do these spells for you when you want it to. I have a Bladesharp spell which basically makes my weapon more effective. What I'm actually doing when I "cast" this spell is trading a little of my personal energy to this spirit thing which then casts the actual spell. The problem with spirit magic is that in order to get the spirit which can cast these spells, you have to overwhelm it with your Power, which for lack of anything better to define it as can be called your life essence. Well, you pit your Power against the Power of this spirit, and if you are stronger, then you possess it, and then you can make it perform to your will. The danger is that the only place to get these spirits is on the Spirit Plane. Normal guys like you and me can't really get to the Spirit Plane voluntarily, so you have to get a spirit shaman or somebody like that to go over and bring these spirits back for you. Unfortunately this process can work in reverse, and big-assed spirits can come over to our plane and attempt to possess us. Thus you have the scenario presented at the beginning of this paper, where you are in spirit combat against some ugly spirit chump. Spirits are dangerous mothers.

Divine magic is the really weird shit. What happens here, or so the priests tell us, is that the various gods, of whom Shalmain is the mightiest and most prolific, bestow spells upon those who wish them. The gods all reside on the Spirit Plane along with the smaller, possessable spirits. The catches on Divine spells are that you have to sacrifice permanent Power to get them, they will only work once, and you can only receive them from a priest, or somebody like that. I generally find that just

Sersus gets his first look at Babs, his new Hu-mount on Edge, Wayne Peacock's RuneQuest III world.



talking to these priestly assholes is sacrifice enough, much less having to give up my fucking life essence. This is why I only have one divine spell, which hopefully I will never need to use. I call it my "Power word jump" spell. Basically whenever I may find the need, like when I'm about to die, I can cast this spell and I'll be able to jump away. I bet ya'll are just green with envy. There are some chumps who use divine spells exclusively, but they generally are the guys who already have some direct connection to whatever god they may be tapping. There is one divine spell which I have heard rumors of that I've been trying to track down. It's called "Shalmain's ever ready organ." Need I say more.

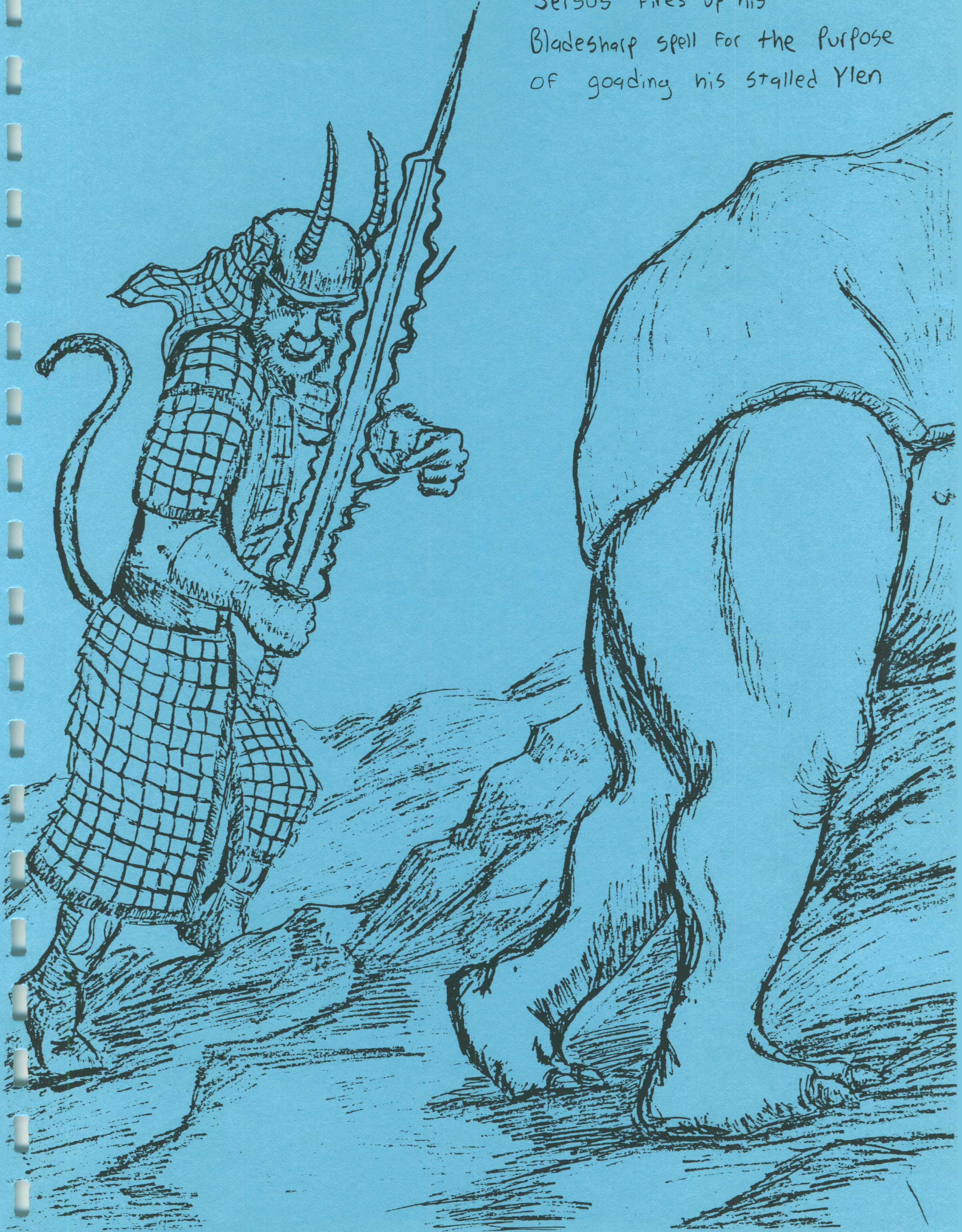
Sorcery is the stuff which I really have no idea about. Sorcerers, of whom I know one, Egyra, don't reveal what the source of their magic is. At least they've never told me. I have some guesses as to where it comes from. My first guess was that the Power for sorcery is derived from these huge orgies which the Hall of True Mages throws every so often. Egyra nearly gave me a black eye when I suggested this. Now I believe it has something to do with bat guano, but I'm not sure. This theory is based on the fact that I stood next to this sorcerer in Histmael the other day, and damn, if he didn't smell like bat shit then I don't know what does. Anyway, sorcerers are basically able to cast their own spells. In other words, they don't need to get some god or spirit to do it. They have a personal link to the magic of the Spirit Plane.

There are endless arguments as to which type of magic is actually more powerful. The priestly guys say that Divine magic is more powerful because it is, well, divine. The spirit masters say that spirit magic is most powerful because the spirits are the natural beings from the place where all magic comes from, the Spirit Plane. Sorcerers say that their magic is most powerful because they are in total control of it and have direct power over their spells. I tell ya, whenever I come across these magic wielding chumps arguing about this stuff, I usually just walk over to the arguing chumps, pull down my pants and piss on their boots. I don't guess this has ever resolved the question, but Law, it does usually change the damn subject. Regardless of which is actually the most effective, just keep in mind that any of the three types, when properly used could probably kick you butt.

Moving on to other subjects, I've had lots of people ask me to write about the difference between Law and Chaos. Actually no one has asked me to write anything, but I at least have to pretend that someone is interested in reading this shit. What exactly is Law, and why does it suck so bad? What is that truly magnificent concept known as Chaos? It's really quite simple.

First lets talk about Law. Lets make a distinction. There is a basic difference between the law, and the Law. The law is that set list of rules, which if we don't follow, we end up on the wrong end of a guardsman's spear. The Law is that stuff which tries to fuck all life as we know it. It is that train of thought which leads to assholes such as Atavin, god of Law. Law, as a concept, means the absence of change. It means the wanting

Sersus fires up his Bladesharp spell for the purpose of goading his stalled Ylen



of nothingness. Any reasonable person can see that it's obviously complete and thorough ylenshit.

Chaos, on the other hand, is the happening thing. Chaos, and those who follow it's principles, are into change. Actions and reactions are Chaos. I personally try to make my life as chaotic as possible. So far I have had fair success.

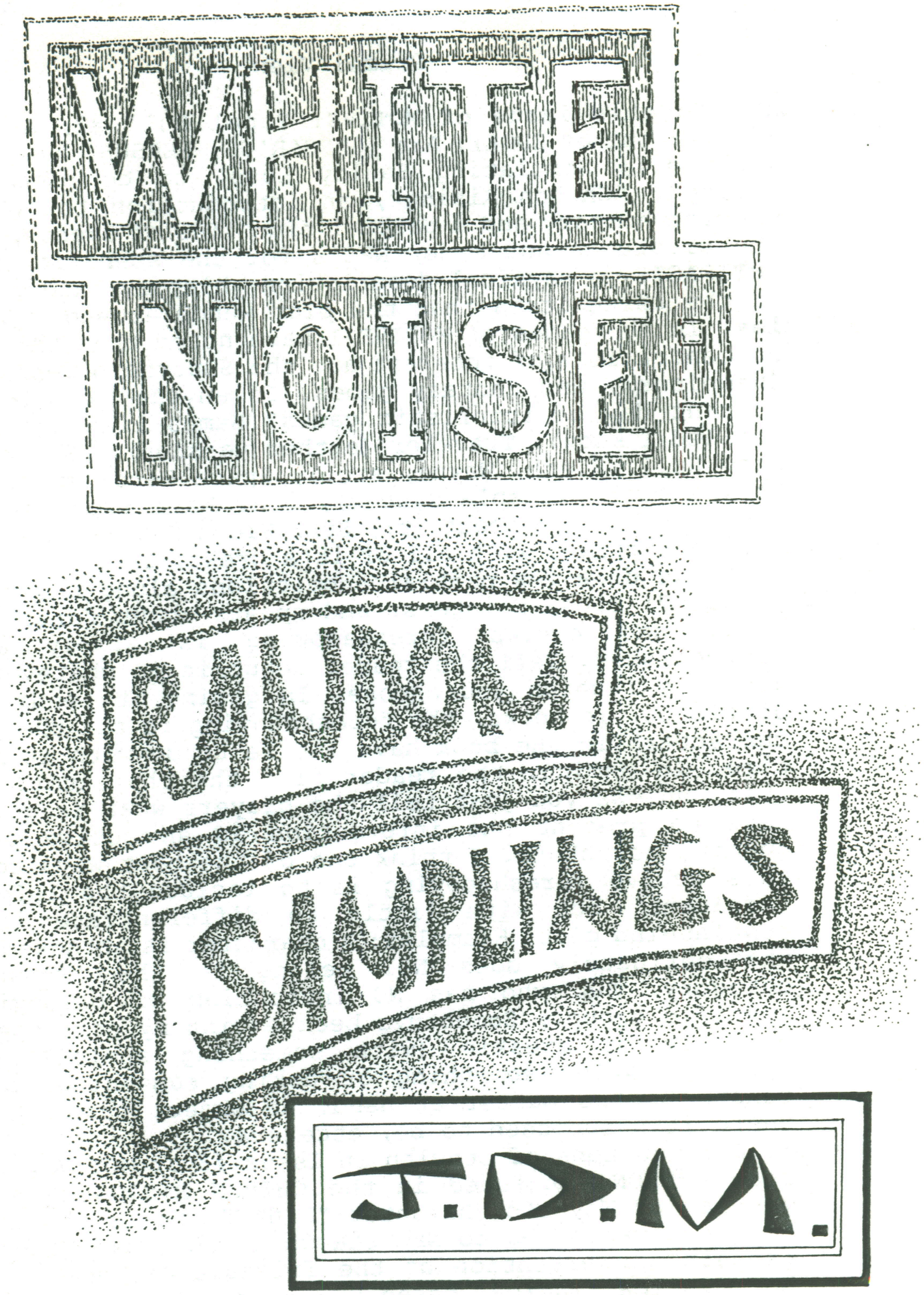
The difference between these two states of being is immense. A whole world of difference you could say. Taken in their pure, physical form, both Law and Chaos are deadly, so don't mess with'em. Luckily, the concepts are not too difficult to understand, so just try and figure out which course you want to pattern your actions towards, and deal with it. Take some advice from your buddy Sersus, don't be a Law following pussy.

Now we have reached the last topic of my little rambling regarding the funky, fucked-up bits of the possibly inexplicable, although not un-understandable spiritual, and other such ylenshit, aspects on Edge. This is death, and what actually happens to us when we are dead. Now, I don't know about you, but I used to have a healthy respect for the concept of death. Especially the physical realities of actually dying. You're probably asking yourself, "Sersus. What do you mean you 'used' to have a respect for death? Does this mean you no longer have a healthy respect for death?" Well, what it means is that I have more respect for the process of dying and what comes after than ever before, because it happened to me. Yep, I've been as dead as Marlod's dick, and yet I'm here now to talk about it. The reason I'm here is that I was very fortunate to be around a Person who had the Divine resurrection spell, and even more fortunate that she was actually willing to use it on me to bring me back. That took guts on her part. The reason why I was dead was because of a motherfucking Nightrider which possessed me and got me hacked up by my compatriots. I really hate Nightriders. If there's one race on Edge which deserves to have it's balls cut off and shoved up their nostrils, it's the ever-feltching populous of the Nightriders.

Being dead turned out to not be half bad. Shit, who am I kidding, it was fucking great. I don't want to spoil any surprises, but let me just say that when you die you will never suffer for a lack of milk. I can't honestly say that I'm going to go out and try and get myself killed again. Hell, I've still got too much Shalmain worship to achieve. I will say that I'm not nearly as repulsed by the idea of the afterlife. I guess that technically my spirit went to the Spirit Plane somewhere. So does that mean that the Spirit Plane, where all magic is originally spawned from, is actually a plane of the dead? Who gives a shit. Just accept the fact that while your still living, it's not a place you'll want to hang out at.

In closing let me reiterate, magic of all forms can seriously fuck you up. Be respectful of those invariably goofy looking guys who are strictly magic wielders. Remember that Law sucks, while Chaos is cool. And lastly, being dead ain't half bad, unless you like flat chested women.

Next: Sightseeing on Edge



WHITE NOISE:

RANDOM SAMPLINGS

J.D.M.

Primal View

Contents In this issue of MOTIVE: Papal Bull #2; Art (a Jackal Warrior out of EDGE); Art (SERS'R'US; SERSUS' new money making venture.); Simulating Sanity Loss, to be used in "Chthon Rising"; "Chthon Rising", an introduction to the plot with pregame history and a partial time line of events; the rest of the creatures and major NPC's for the scenario; and lastly, ARTIFACTS, a physical description, history, and game write up of the three items that the plot wends around.

Oddities: In the pages of MOTIVE I have noted that the two largest concentrations of interest are the Superhero Genre' (actually Champions), and Fantasy games. Is anyone else interested in current day or futuristic games? Games like Espionage (mis-spelled I know), Traveler (either version), BattleTech (yes I know Null, Kieth, Wayne, etc.), Space Hero (my personal vote forthe most playable system), Star Wars (yes Wayne, but you don,t write much about it), Star Fleet Battles (Yea! I blew up the Enterprise, with all of it's crew), etc... If so then why don't we do a few partial submittions along those lines?

Et Tu Brute'?: Tips, pointers, and spears about foreshadowing. In books and comics foreshadowing is simply and easily accomplished. Tell the reader about it in whatever subtle or unsubtle fashion you choose. In gaming it tends to be more difficult. In books, the foreshadowing is for the reader. The characters in the book have little to do with it most of the time. In gaming, the reader 'is' the character. This means that, unless you just tell the players what is going on, you have to present the information as an active part of the ongoing adventure. I think one of the best ways to introduce this active foreshadowing is to include the information by 'Accident' but with little to differentiate it from the continueing plot. Examples: A character is attacked by someone who definately does NOT belong to the 'known enemies' catagory. But who has NO indication of belonging to any specific group.; Somebodys been eating my porridge. An 'odd' burglery or breakin (with something stolen?).; Someone, anyone, saying something or asking something that doesn't relate to the matter at hand. An object that isn't what or where it's supposed to be, etcetera.

Errata: All mentions of Cthulhu in Issue #3 of MOTIVE, should have read CHTHON. Included in the CHTHON RISING time line is a mention of Wayne's character "MYNAX". He is an older PC that has been relegated to NPC status in the Ward Major/Minutemen campain (an extention of the Triangle-Geochemical campain). Any mystical/magical based PC or NPC of sufficiant power can be substituted if the scenario is to be used within another existing campain.

Disclaimer: All Bad Taste and Questionable Matterial can be directly blamed on to much caffine and late night editing.

Next Issue: More CHTHON RISING. What are the police doing during all of this? And how about that reporter fellow? Clues, Clues, and more clues. What, where, when, who, and how. The return of "Wierdness" (muted cheering, Bronx style). Art? Who Knows?

PAPAL BULL

A general, free form, conceptual list of thoughts on the formation and type of early religious practices.
As found in Fantasy Roleplaying games.

FOR USE IN PLAYING ROLEPLAYING GAMES ONLY

Primitives: Still the stone-age. Into Pantheons & and the Myths of Creation. Tribal life and early settlements.

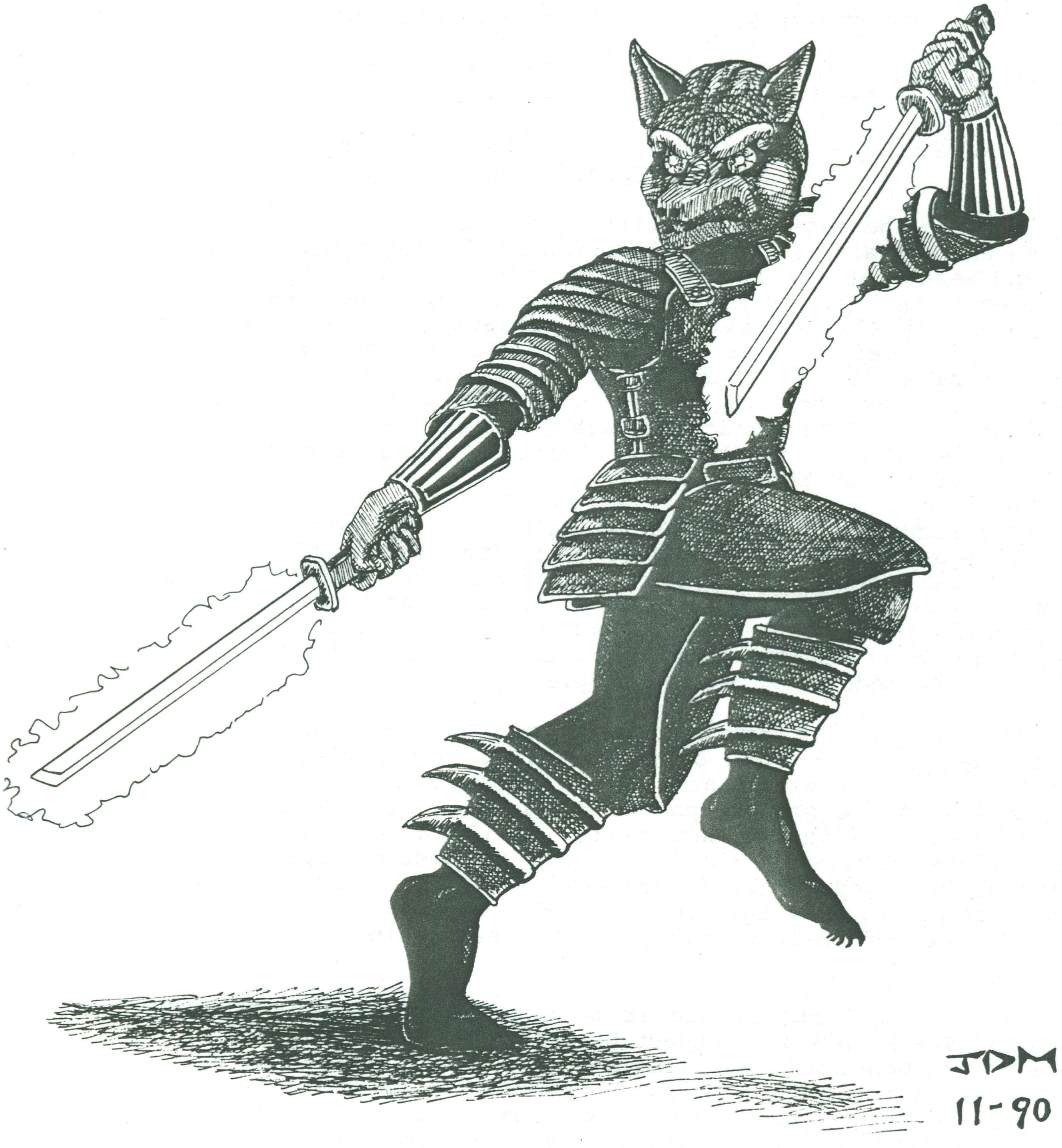
Continuing - Flickering Lights - Semi-related groups
(Impure Speculation)

With an increasing understanding of 'reality' comes a need to define and explain it. Any explanation of the world must include a way and means for its creation. Since the world is controlled and governed by the Spirits and Gods that inhabit it, the creation myth should include them as well. Most any explanation of Gods, Spirits, and related beings will include information on their interrelationships. So, a standard creation myth will include the following: First, how and why the world was created; Second, the relation of Gods and Spirits to each other and their world; Third, the nature of the relationship between the People and their Spirits, Gods, and World.

The nature of the World still maintains a simple pattern. As primitive peoples develop their societies they retain their earlier beliefs and concepts. The creation myth acts to express the knowledge held by the people as well as the imaginations of those who teach the knowledge. And almost always, the nature or act of creation will maintain a rigid familiarity to processes that can be observed and understood by the people.

The Pantheon of Gods will retain the "Beings" who are related to the desires and needs of the changing life style. Those Gods which are most closely related to the important issues will achieve ascendancy in the growing pantheon. Usually the Gods and Spirits will interrelate in the same manner as the areas they influence interrelate. Similarly, the function of the gods and spirits in the world is dictated by the forces which prompted their creation in the first place. Therefore, the gods will respond in the world both as the areas of their control, and the perceptions of the people require them to.

The Role of the People is both simpler and less straightforward. The People are subject to the whimsies and desires of the Spirits and Gods. But they also are able (with varying success) to influence or force the Gods and Spirits to aid them in their life. At the same time it is the People who inhabit the World and partake of its' bounty. So the People (of whatever physical form) are at the center of importance on the World, and, though affected by both the Spirits and Gods, are capable of influencing to some degree nearly all aspects of their own existence.


JDM
11-90

SIMULATING SANITY LOSS

Mythos Mind Control

To reiterate from issue #3, this is intended to simulate the personal loss of sanity and control brought on by viewing a major otherworldly demonic creature. And is not intended to inflict a permanent effect. It's only reason for existence is to limit the capabilities of PC's and NPC's and add a flavour of horror to the champions milieu.

The basic mechanic I have chosen is the ability of **Mind Control** to force undesired actions on a character. A number of **major** modifications to the basic power are required.

First. The power will have an effect when the creature is actively perceived (this negates any attack roll that must be made on the character). This can be with any targeting sense on a normal roll (an actual roll is **not** needed if a character is fighting a creature), any discriminating sense is the roll is made by two or more (not counting the smell perception mod from a creatures disadvantages), or with any other sense if the perception roll is made by five or more.

Second. Once the creature has been perceived an Intelligence roll must be made. All relevant skills the character has **must** be checked as secondary skills to aid the Int. roll (this is not a good thing). If the character has any Luck or Unluck all dice must be rolled and applied as follows; Luck is added to the dice roll, and Unluck is subtracted from the dice roll. If the Int. roll succeeds then proceed. If the Int. roll fails then the lucky character automatically **halves** the number if **dice** rolled for the Mind Control

Third. Before any applicable mental defenses are checked for affect, a series of modifiers are applied to the number obtained from the Mind Control dice rolled. These modifications are obtained from character skills (if appropriate skills are known), psychological limitations, and actual character experiences (PC's and NPC's intended for play will be totalled, other characters must calculate from player knowledge and a table to follow).

Fourth. The actual effect produced by the Mind Control is determined by checking the **level** of effect on a table to follow and reading off the penalties.

Fifth. When checking to determine whether a character has broken out of the effects of the Mind Control ignore the standard mod's to the roll and use the effects engendered by the Mind Control (with the exception of the +1 for every attempt after the first). Also a successful check to break out of the Mind Control will only reduce the effect to the next lower level on the table.

Lastly. The Mind Control does not actually limit the actions a character can make. It only limits their ability to successfully carry out an action.

Sample skills relevant to making the Intelligence roll.

Knowledge Skills: KS OTHER-DIMENSIONAL BEINGS (ANY TYPE); KS MAGIC (OCCULT, MYSTIC, ETC); PS MAGIC (OCCULT, MYSTIC, ETC);

Appropriate modifiers to the Mind Control roll.

Character skills and Experience: Only one bonus or penalty from each category can be counted for any one character.

CATEGORY ONE: FAMILIARITY or EXPERIENCE WITH

FAMILIARITY w MAGIC (OCCULT, MYSTICS, ETC)	+5 BONUS
FAMILIARITY w OTHER-DIMENSIONAL BEINGS	+5 BONUS
FAMILIARITY w OTHER DIMENSIONS (ANY)	+5 BONUS
FAMILIARITY w THE CHTHONIAN MYTHOS	+10 BONUS

(ALL CHARACTERS WILL RECEIVE THIS AFTER THE FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH MYTHOS MIND CONTROL)

CATEGORY TWO: KNOWLEDGE (ie SKILLS)

KS of DIMENSIONS (ANY)	+10 BONUS
KS of OTHER DIMENSIONAL BEINGS	+10 BONUS
KS or PS w MAGIC (OCCULT, MYSTIC, ETC)	+10 BONUS
KS of CHTHONIAN MYTHOS	+20 BONUS

CATEGORY THREE: POWERS & ABILITIES (ALL ARE PARANORMAL)

POWERS DEFINED AS MAGIC "SPELLS"	+15 BONUS
POWERS OF INTERDIMENSIONAL TRAVEL (ANY)	+15 BONUS
POWERS OF OR AS A DEMONIC BEING	+15 BONUS
ACTUALLY ARE A DEMONIC BEING	+30 BONUS

CATEGORY FOUR: BONUS PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

15pt	CODE vs KILLING	+15 BONUS
20pt	CODE OF CHIVALRY	+20 BONUS
20pt	HONORABLE	+20 BONUS
10pt	WILL NOT LIE	+10 BONUS
15pt	OVERCONFIDENT	+15 BONUS

(ANY PSYCH LIM THAT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS "GOOD" OR "STRONG MINDED" IS USED AS A BONUS)

CATEGORY FIVE: PENALTY PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

15pt	ALWAYS OBEYS ORDERS OF SUPERIORS	-15 PNLTY
15pt	CLAUSTROPHOBIA	-15 PNLTY
20pt	FEAR OF CROWDS	-15 PNLTY
15pt	VENGEFUL	-15 PNLTY
15pt	LIKES TO FIGHT	-15 PNLTY
20pt	COLD BLOODED KILLER	-20 PNLTY

(ANY PSYCH LIM THAT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS "BAD" OR "WEAK MINDED" IS USED AS A PENALTY)

CATEGORY SIX: BERSERKS OR ENRAGED, PENALTIES

A PENALTY EQUAL TO THE LARGEST DISADVANTAGE OF THIS TYPE THAT THE CHARACTER HAS.	-? PNLTY

(A BERSERK OR ENRAGED IS INDICATION OF A WEAK MIND AND IS USED AS A PENALTY. IF A CHARACTER HAS TWO OR MORE DISADVANTAGES OF THIS TYPE THEN ONLY THE LARGEST IS USED.)

CATEGORY SEVEN: ARE A CREATURE OR CULTIST IN THE MYTHOS

UNAFFECTED BY THE MIND CONTROL	NA

NOTE: IN REFERENCE TO CATEGORIES FOUR AND FIVE - IF A PSYCH LIM IS QUESTIONABLE AS EITHER A BONUS OR PENALTY IGNORE IT!

LEVEL OF EFFECT BY THE MIND CONTROL

AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION	SKILL PENALTY
0 TO 9	UNEASY	-1 TO ALL ACTIONS
10 TO 19	DISTURBED	-2 TO ALL ACTIONS
20 TO 29	FEARFUL	-3 TO ALL ACTIONS
30 TO 39	TOUCHED	-4 TO ALL ACTIONS
40 TO 49	UNSANE	1/2 SKILL[1]
50 PLUS	GONE BYE BYE	NPC CITY[2]

[1] (AT 1/2 SKILL ROLL AND AT -5 TO RECOVER, A MILD INSANITY)

[2] (AT 1/2 SKILL ROLL AND AT -6 TO RECOVER, A FULL INSANITY)

*** IMPORTANT NOTE ***

Effects of the Mythos Mind Control are **NOT** cumulative. A second or third exposure can only effect a character if the total modified roll inflicts a **greater** effect upon the character.

BREAKING OUT OF THE MIND CONTROL

To break out of the Mind Control the character in question must simply make an ego roll. This is modified by the following effects. One, the skill penalty effect of the Mind Control. Two, at plus 1 if successfully Psycho-analyzed (or appropriate similar skill). Three, at plus 1 per recovery roll after the first. Four, at plus 1 if affected by Recovery, Healing, Int Aid, Ego Aid, or Pres Aid. Five, at plus 3 if they helped to defeat the creature causing the Mind Control. No other pluses are allowed to effect the breakout.

A SIMPLE TABLE OF INSANITIES.

MILD (PLAYER MAY STILL PLAY CHARACTER)

- ONE: DEMENTIA PRAECOX. CHARACTER HAS AN EFFECTIVE INTELLIGENCE OF ZERO AND MUST MAKE A NINE OR LESS ROLL TO MAKE ANY DECISION OR CHOICE.
- TWO: EXTREME DEPRESSION. CHARACTER HAS AN EFFECTIVE EGO OF ZERO AND MUST MAKE A NINE OR LESS ROLL TO TAKE ANY SELF MOTIVATED ACTION OR RESIST ANY ORDER OR SUGGESTED COURSE OF ACTION
- THREE: MILD PANTOPHOBIA. CHARACTER HAS AN EFFECTIVE PRESENCE OF ZERO AND MUST MAKE A NINE OR LESS ROLL TO TAKE ANY OFFENSIVE ACTION OR RESIST RUNNING AWAY FROM ANY ATTACK.

SEVERE (PC BECOMES AN NPC FOR THE DURATION OF THE INSANITY)

- ONE: CATATONIA. CHARACTER CURLS UP IN A FETAL POSITION AND WILL DO ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.
- TWO: SEVERE PANTOPHOBIA. CHARACTER IS AFRAID OF AND WILL RUN FROM EVERYTHING (A FAILED PRESENCE ROLL OF NINE OR LESS INDICATES FEAR OF SOMETHING NORMAL). CHARACTER WILL TAKE NO AGGRESSIVE ACTION.
- THREE: HOMICIDAL MANIAC. CHARACTER GOES BERSERK. WILL ATTACK CLOSEST MOVING OBJECT RELENTLESSLY, WITH INTENT TO KILL. PLAYER CAN CONTINUE TO PLAY CHARACTER.
- FOUR: MANIAC. CHARACTER GOES ENRAGED. WILL ATTACK WHICH EVER CREATURE CAUSED THE INSANITY. PLAYER CAN CONTINUE TO PLAY CHARACTER.

A SIMPLE TABLE OF INSANITIES, CONTINUED.

SEVERE INSANITIES, CONTINUED.

- FIVE: SUICIDAL. CHARACTER MUST MAKE A NORMAL, UNMODIFIED EGO ROLL DURING EVERY POST SEGMENT TWELVE. IF THE ROLL IS FAILED THEN THE CHARACTER WILL ATTEMPT SUICIDE BY A RANDOM HANDY MEANS. PLAYER CAN CONTINUE TO PLAY CHARACTER.
- SIX: AMNESIAC. CHARACTER FORGETS EVERY THING BUT THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE, DEX BASED SKILLS, AND COMBAT SKILLS. ACTIONS TAKEN WILL BE DETERMINED RANDOMLY.

****

WARNING!

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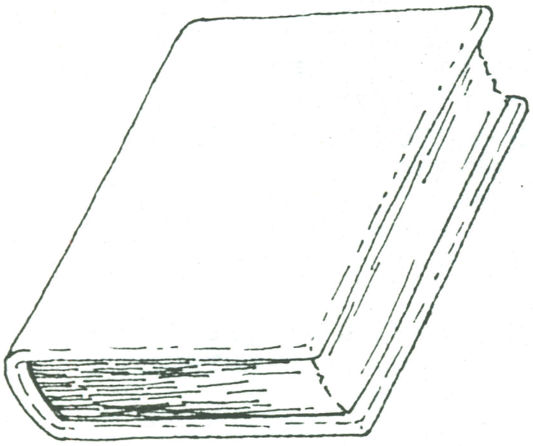
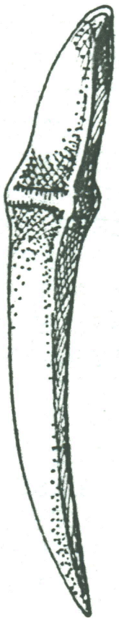
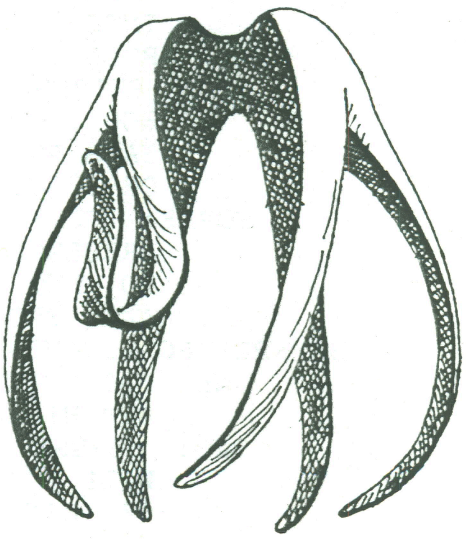
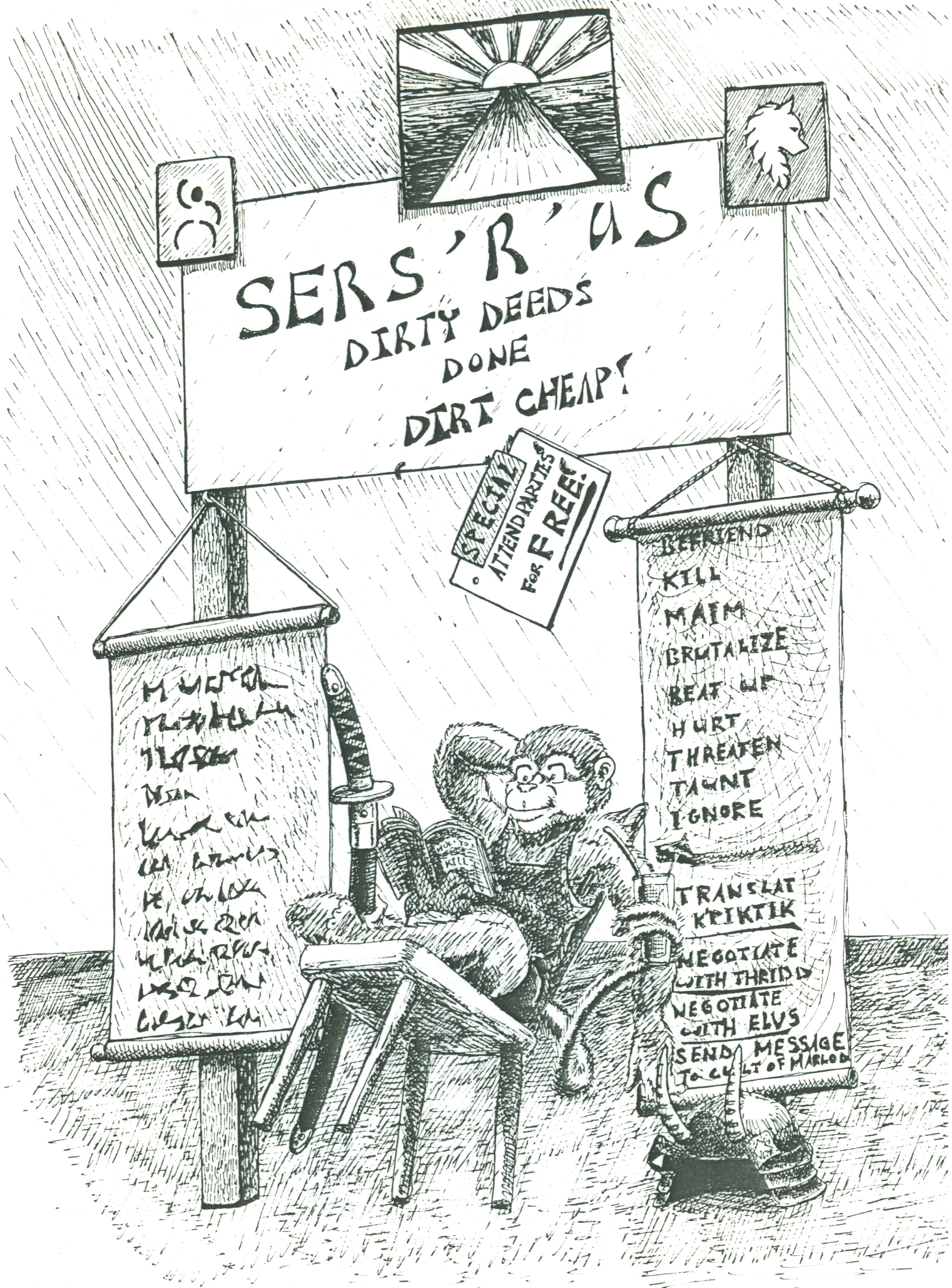
To anyone who wishes to playtest this scenario, NPC and plot information follows this point. Read no further.

To anyone with a weak stomach or gentle sensibilities. Read no further (actualy this is just to keep people from complaining that they don't think this information is pertinent).








SERS'R'US
DIRTY DEEDS
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DIRT CHEAP!
SPECIAL
ATTEND PARTIES
FOR FREE!
BEFRIEND
KILL
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KRIKTIK
NEGOTIATE
WITH THRIDD
NEGOTIATE
WITH ELVS
SEND MESSAGE
TO CULT OF MARLOD
HOW TO
KILL

JDM
11-90

"CHTHON RISING"

Rev. #2

This scenario was conceived for competition style play. It can be adapted to regular play by changing or ignoring various plot points, NPC's, locations, or skill/power limits.

PLOT

The basic plot revolves around a "CTHULHU" like demonic summoning. "AB'ABAD MUSTAFA el DERETH" is a worshiper of "CHTHON" (An ancient and vastly evil being from beyond the dimensional wall). Granted mystic powers by his squalid deity, he searches for the three talismans necessary to open a massive dimensional rift during the longest night of the year and allow the hordes of CHTHON to invade our world.

LOCATIONS

The scenario as written takes place entirely in the state of MASSACHUSETTS during any contemporary year desired. The major plotted events occur in the following places: Arkham Mass.; Miscatonic Univ. library, in Arkham Mass.; The freighter *****, 150 miles off the coast of Cape Cod Mass.; The Boston Museum of Natural History, in Boston Mass.; the mountain resort of *****, in NW Mass.; and the peak of Satchems Watch, a bald mountain top in NW Mass.

Minor locations where clues of NPC's can be found are: "The Arkham Examiner", Arkham's local daily paper; Arkham City Police station; the sight of the first summoning attempt; Arkham General Hospital, (where the hero ***** is recovering); the warehouse where the ghouls were created and fed; the offices of Miscatonic Labs; a fishing town named "Dunwitch"; a beach house on Cape Cod; a rental house and grove of trees in a Boston suburb; the coast guard office in Boston Harbor; and the road-block/command post near the mountain resort.

TIME LINE OF ADVENTURE

PREGAME OCCURRENCES

1812: AB'ABAD MUSTAFA el DERETH is born to a doctor in Syria.

1829: AB'ABAD MUSTAFA el DERETH attends school in London. Studies Language and phonetics.

1847: AB'ABAD MUSTAFA el DERETH works on archeological project in India. Workers find the PALE WHITE BOOK in a hidden crypt.

1848: AB'ABAD MUSTAFA el DERETH fails to translate the BOOK after six months of effort. He also fails to resist the influence of the book on his mind. Failing to steal the BOOK he sets out to master the mystic arts in order to fulfill his chosen destiny.

1852: The BOOK finds its way into the dusty, unused family library of Sir Leslie Montigue (leader of the archeological expedition that found it) and remains there untouched for over one hundred years.

1889: A British expedition searching in the jungles of South America for unknown ruins of the Mayan's finds a single pyramid containing a tomb. Finding in the tomb a single burial Cloak make of snake skin. With the general failure of the expedition, the party returned to England and dispersed without unveiling their single discovery. The leader of the group, Sir Thomas Montigue, retains the CLOAK and places it in his private collection of antiquities.

1832: During the close of his short merchant career trading commodities in China, Sir Richard Montigue acquired what was reputed to be the personal dagger of the Duke of Chi'in. First Emperor of China, and one of the bloodiest tyrants ever to walk the face of the earth. And of course, he too placed the item in the now huge, family collection of antiquities.

1939: Eustice Montigue, age 18, embarks upon a career in archeology. Inspired by dreams of dread after playing with a book reputed to have been found nearly a century before by his great grandfather.

1989: Sir Eustice Montigue completes his research and finally links the three Artifacts gathered by his family years before. Sensing their nature, and knowing their history he begins his search for a means to safeguard or dispose of the Unholy trinity.

1990: In the midst of Sir Montigues efforts, AB'ABAD MUSTAFA el DERETH learns the locations of all three items. The race is on.

TIME LINE OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY AB'ABAD MUSTAFA el DERETH

August 29, 1990: el DERETH plots an attempt on Sir Montigue's life. Attempt fails but puts Montigue into a coma. Montigue winds up in hospital for an extended stay.

August 30, 1990: Plans made by Montigue months before are put carried out by his solicitor. The BOOK is shipped secretly to a colleague in Canada who takes it to the library at Miscatonic University. The Knife is shipped as unspecified goods on the tramp freighter "Dawn Trader". To be delivered to Sir Montigue in Liverpool by personal pickup. The Cloak is shipped to a colleague in South America whose "loans" it to the Boston Museum of Natural History as an addition to an exhibit featuring South American Indian native crafts.

December 15, 1990: 4PM, AB'ABAD MUSTAFA el DERETH has successfully finished tracing the location of all three artifacts and has arrived in Arkham Mass to gather them together under his hand and begin the conquest of the world.

*** START OF GAME TIME LINE ***

DAY 0

Sun, Dec 15, 1990:

5:00 PM, el DERETH checks into the Bide A'while Motel.

11:30 PM, el DERETH visits Dean Merriweather at home. The Dean is Head of the History Department and is currently acting Dept. Head for the library. After questioning, el DERETH leaves the Dean and his wife in a Psychic coma.

DAY 1

Mon, Dec 16, 1990:

11:00 AM, el DERETH visits Dr. Edward Scott at Miscatonic Labs and Mind Controls him.

11:15 AM, They both leave for "lunch".

12:30 PM, el DERETH, with Dr. Scott visit Miscatonic University Library. Dr. Scott enters and uses his clearance to enter the Rare Book Room where he proceeds to steal THE BOOK BOUND IN PALE LEATHER.

1:00 PM, to 9:00 PM, el DERETH studies the BOOK.

10:00 PM, to 10:30 PM, el DERETH uses the BOOK to create GHOULS. Transforms seven warehouse workers, while slaughtering seven more during the spell.

11:00 PM, el DERETH and Dr. Scott return to the motel. el DERETH studies the BOOK until morning.

Day 2

Tues, Dec 17, 1990:

7:00 AM, The Ghouls attack and eat an elderly couple to the west of the warehouse. The couples wounded dog escapes and returns to their home several blocks off.

3:00 PM, el Dereth borrows a van from the owner of the motel (using mind control to make him forget it), goes by a neighborhood high school, and mind controls seven girls (ages 14 to 17) into coming with him.

4:00 PM, Meet the ghouls at the cemetery west of town.

4:15 PM, to 11:00 PM, Feed the caretaker to the ghouls, and start preparations for the coming ritual.

11:00 PM, Start the ritual. Kill one girl every ten minutes.

11:30 PM, The hero "Mynax", having sensed the vile magics, finally arrives on the scene. Disrupting the spell, and injuring el DERETH he meets defeat after preventing the summoning and saving three of the girls. Barely escaping with his life he summons the police and sinks into unconsciousness.

Day 3

Wen, Dec 18, 1990

1:00 AM, el DERETH leaves Arkham riding in a stolen limo. Five Ghouls ride in the caretakers panel truck eating one of the dead sacrifices. One Ghoul is left dead on the hill and on Ghoul ran off into the cemetery and was left behind.

1:30 AM, el DERETH stops for gas NE of Arkham. The attendant gets the license number of both vehicles. He also notices some "growls" from the truck. el DERETH tells him that he is moving some guard dogs and leaves. Leaves some blood stains on the pavement to. But in the odd coloured light they look like drops of oil.

3:30 AM, el DERETH arrives in the fishing town of Dunwitch on Plum Island and sets up shop in the courthouse.

4:00 AM to 5:30 AM, The spell to convert the town into fishmen begins. The Ghouls capture and bring in humans for sacrifice. Three hundred and forty three humans are transformed, four hundred and thirty nine are killed, seven young girls are captured.

*** 5:30 AM, The PC heros arrive in Arkham ***

6:00 AM, el DERETH and his Ghouls leave Dunwitch on the trawler "Working Girl". Most of the fishmen follow swimming (about 20 get left behind).

6:30 AM, el DERETH Summons a storm 100 miles with a one hundred mile radius (the storm remains for the rest of the game).

7:00 AM, On board the "Working Girl" el DERETH prepares a second time to summon a Minor Chthonian (written up in issue 3 of MOTIVE as a minuscule star-spawn of Cthulhu).

8:00 AM, The summoning begins.

9:00 AM, The summoning succeeds and the chthonian is successfully controlled.

9:30 AM, Send chthonian to find the freighter "Dawn Trader" and return to report it's location.

4:30 PM, The chthonian returns from a successful mission.

10:00 PM, The "Working Girl" intercepts the "Dawn Trader". The chthonian and fishmen attack. The freighters radioman gets off two messages. The first, reports a near collision with the "Working Girl". The second, is two minutes of hysterical babble about fishmen and monsters from the deep eating people.

10:15 PM, The crew is dead (except for one slightly insane cook hiding in the galley freezer. el DERETH boards the freighter, steals the knife and destroys the cargo manifest. Fortunately he fails to steal or destroy a parcel to Sir Montigue that was in the captains safe with the cargo manifest. Leave chthonian on board (eating). Fifty two fishmen stay at the freighter (eating), the rest follow the "Working Girl" back to shore (they aren't controlled, they just don't have anything better to do).

Day 4
Thur, Dec 19, 1990

4:00 AM, el DERETH beaches the "Working Girl" on the eastern side of Cape Cod. Kills all but the mother of a family in a nearby beach house and steals their van. Taking his Ghouls and the woman (to drive the van) he drives to a suburb, next to a thick patch of woods, on the north side of Boston.

4:00 AM to 5:15 AM, the fishmen that had followed the trawler back to shore randomly attack, slaughter, eat, wreak havoc, etc. all along the eastern shore of Cape Cod.

5:15 AM The Fishmen spontaneously return to human form. Many are insane. Those which were under water drown. Mass confusion reins supreme.

7:00 AM, el DERETH calls a realtor with a sign posted on a house that he likes. Controls him into calling the house in closed and being dinner for the Ghouls.

8:00 AM, el DERETH visits a grade school around ten miles from the house and brings back seven more young girls.

9:00 AM to 9:00 PM, Preparations for another ritual.

9:30 to 10:30 PM, el DERETH leaves to steal a tractor trailer truck (with driver)

11:00 PM, Start the ritual to summon a Shoggoth.

12:15 PM, Load the Shoggoth into the truck and go to the Museum.

DAY 5
Fri, Dec 21, 1990

1:30 AM, el DERETH, the Shoggoth and the five remaining Ghouls enter the Museum to get the CLOAK.

HERE THERE BE HEROS: At this point in time, if the PC's do everything right, the Heros should catch-up to el DERETH.

1:30 AM, The Heros, el DERETH, five ghouls, and the Shoggoth have a grand ol' time in the Museum.

*** If the Heros capture or kill el DERETH at this time the scenario is finished! ***

2:00 AM, el DERETH, if unopposed or undefeated, leaves Boston with the surviving Ghouls, the BOOK, the KNIFE, and the CLOAK (if he actually got the CLOAK) for his final destination. The mountain resort town of Warden, on the shoulder of Satchems Watch, just north of Mount Greylock.

4:30 AM, el DERETH arrives in Warden and obtains another house a block down the street from the town hospital.

5:00 AM to 6:00 PM, el DERETH prepares for the final two rituals.

6:30 PM, el DERETH visits the hospital and recruits the last fourteen required sacrifices.

11:00 PM, el DERETH begins summoning a Major Chthonian in the local theater.

12:00 PM, The summoning is complete. el DERETH leaves for the peak of Satchems Watch while the Chthonian carries out it's orders. The complete destruction of the town and everyone in it.

Day 6
Sat, Dec 22, 1990: The First day of Winter and the Longest night of the year.

2:30 AM, el DERETH arrives at the peak of the mountain to prepares for the final summoning.

3:00 AM to 11:00 PM, el DERETH prepares for the final summoning.

11:00 PM, The final summoning begins.

12:00 PM, The True Chthonian arrives. Goodbye world!

Day 7
Sun, Dec 23, 1990

12:00 AM, ? Who can say?

Actually, this sequence **can** be halted at a number of points. The skill and ability of the players is essential to the successful resolution of this scenario.

CHTHONIAN GHOUL

STAT	NAME	COST
25	STH	15
18	DEX	24
18	CON	16
10	BOD	
11	INT	1
12	EGO	4
20	PRES	10
-10	COM	--
15	PD	4
15	ED	7
4	SPD	12
9	REC	--
36	END	--
40	STUN	8
STATS COST		101

DISADVANTAGES	TOTAL
HATES BRIGHT LIGHT	15
WON'T CO-OPERATE	15
HUNTED BY HEROS	30
VULN TO FIRE 1.5*S&B	20
CASUAL KILLER	20
TOTAL DISADVANTAGES =	110

SKILLS	ROLL	COST
STEALTH	13>	3
LEVELS: +2 CLAW, GRAB, AND SNEAK	+2	6
TOTAL SKILLS COST	=	9

COST	POWERS & ABILITIES
12	ARMOUR 6PD & 4ED, NOT VS ARMOUR PIERCING ATTACKS
6	RUNNING +3"
6	END RED 1/2 ON 25 STH (TO 1)
19	HtH KA 1D6 (2D6 w STH) END RED 1/2 (TO 0)
13	DAMAGE REDUCTION 1/2 ED, NOT vs FIRE ATTACKS
20	DAMAGE REDUCTION 1/2 PD
5	DISCERNING SCENT
10	TRACKING SCENT
6	ENHANCED SENSES +2
5	INFRARED VISION
102	= TOTAL POWERS COST

TOTAL CHARACTER COST = 212

** ** ** ** ** ** ** ** **

CHTHONIAN FISHMAN

STAT	NAME	COST
15	STH	5
14	DEX	12
14	CON	8
10	BOD	--
5	INT	-5
5	EGO	-10
10	PRES	--
0	COM	-5
9	PD	--
3	ED	--
3	SPD	6
6	REC	--
28	END	--
30	STUN	5
STATS COST		16

DISADVANTAGES	TOTAL
HATES HUMANS	15
SIMPLE MINDED	10
VISIOUS KILLER	20
UNLUCK 2D6	10
DISTINCTIVE LOOKS CONCEALABLE, NOTICED	15
TOTAL DISADVANTAGES	70

SKILLS	ROLL	COST
LEVELS +4 WITH HAND TO HAND		12
TOTAL SKILLS COST	=	9

COST	POWERS & ABILITIES
9	ARMOUR 6pts PD
3	LIFE SUPPORT: BREATH UNDER WATER
-2	RUNNING -1"
6	SWIMMING +3"
3	INFRARED VISION, ONLY UNDER WATER
4	ENDURANCE REDUCTION ON 15 STH, TO (0 END)
19	HtH KA 1D6 (2D6 w STH) AT (0 END)
42 =	TOTAL POWERS & ABILITIES COST

TOTAL CHARACTER COST = 70

CHTHONIAN SORCERER: HIGH PRIEST OF CULT

NAME: AB'ABAD MUSTAFA el DERETH

STAT	NAME	COST
18	STH	8
18	DEX	24
18	CON	26
12	BOD	4
18	INT	8
18	EGO	16
18	PRES	8
12	COM	1
19	PD	6
19	ED	6
4	SPD	12
10	REC	4
36	END	--
40	STUN	10
STATS COST		123

DISADVANTAGES	TOTAL
DISTINCTIVE LOOKS 11>	10
HUNTED, LGSV&A 11> THE GLASS HAND	35
UNLUCK 2D6	20
ENRAGED BY THE FAILURE OF HIS PLANS 14> , REC. ON 11>	20
MEGALOMANIAC	20
UNDERESTIMATES FOES	15
VULNERABLE TO FIRE 1.5 * STUN & BODY	40
VULNERABLE TO MAGIC 1.5 * STUN	20
BERSERK IF HE TAKES BODY, 14>, REC 8>	35
SUSCEPTIBLE TO ELEC. 3D6 / PHASE	20
HUNTED BY US GOV 11>	35
VULNERABLE TO TELEPATHY 2 * EFFECT	20
FREE POINTS	100
VILLAIN BONUS & EXP	129
TOTAL DISADVANTAGES	530

COST	POWERS
15	ARMOUR 10PD
15	ARMOUR 10ED
15	POWER DEF. 15pts.
16	EGO DEF. 12+4=16pts, 8pt RES
15	DAMAGE RED. 1/4 PD, RES.
15	DAMAGE RED. 1/4 ED, RES.
2	RUNNING +1"
3	LIFE SUPPORT, NO AGEING
45	POWER POOL, 45pt. POOL
40	POOL COST: ONLY FOR CHANGING BODY SPEC. EFF., CHANGE ON 14>, TAKE PHASE TO CHANGE.
110	MULTIPOWER: CHTHONIAN MAGIC
6u	RKA 5D6 ED, END RED (0) ACT 14> HALF PHASE TO ACTIVATE.
3u	RKA 1D6, BASED ON ECV, AoE RAD EXT. AREA (9"), SELECTIVE, END RED (0), ACT 14>, HALF PHASE TO ACTIVATE.
6u	END. DRAIN 4D6, AoE (4"), END. RED. (0), ACT 14>, HALF PHASE TO ACTIVATE
6u	INT. DRAIN 5D6, AT RANGE, END. RED. (0), ACT 14>, HALF PHASE TO ACTIVATE
6u	MIND CONTROL 14D6, END RED (0) ACT 14>, HALF PHASE TO ACTIVATE
318	TOTAL POWERS COST

SKILLS	ROLL	COST
KNOW CHTHONIAN MYTHOS	17>	8
CULTURE, UNDERGROUND	13>	3
CULTURE, HIGH SOCIETY	13>	3
PERC. MONEY $500,000/YR		5
PS PSYCHOLOGIST	14>	5
BUREAUCRATICS	13>	3
PS MAGIC	15>	11
LINGUIST	NA	3
LANGUAGES: (NATIVE=ARABIC), ENGLISH FC2, GERMAN FC1, LATIN FC1, GREEK FC2, SPANISH FC1, FRENCH FC1, CHINESE (CANTON) FC3, RUSSIAN FC3, ITALIAN FC1, HINDUSTANI FC3, TOTAL LANGUAGE COST		18
LEVELS +4 OVERALL	+4	40
SKILLS COST		99

TOTAL CHARACTER COST 123+318+99=530

LIBRARIAN AT MISCATONIC UNIVERSITY LIBRARY; RARE BOOKS ROOM

NAME: MR. C. D. WARD

STAT	NAME	COST
11	STH	1
11	DEX	3
10	CON	--
10	BOD	--
13	INT	3
9	EGO	-2
10	PRES	--
10	COM	--
2	PD	--
2	ED	--
2	SPD	-1
4	REC	--
20	END	--
21	STUN	--
STATS COST		4

SKILLS	ROLL	COST
PS LIBRARIAN	13>	4
KS LITERATURE	13>	3
KS RARE & OBSCURE LIT.	14>	4
BUREAUCRATICS	11>	3
KS MISCATONIC U. LIB.	14>	4
PS HORROR WRITER	12>	3
KS LITERARY MARKETS	12>	2
SCHOLAR	NA	3
TOTAL SKILLS COST	=	26

TOTAL CHARACTER COST = 30

DISADVANTAGES	TOTAL
ABSENT MINDED	5
FEAR OF THE DARK	5
WATCHED BY MISC. U. SECURITY 8>	5
FEAR OF VIOLENCE	10
DISTINCTIVE LOOKS 8> CONCEALABLE	5
TOTAL DISADVANTAGES	30

** ** ** ** ** ** ** ** **

MUSEUM CURATOR, BOSTON MUNICIPAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

NAME: DR. DAVID O'SULLIVAN

STAT	NAME	COST
9	STH	-1
11	DEX	3
12	CON	4
10	BOD	--
13	INT	3
13	EGO	6
15	PRES	5
14	COM	2
2	PD	--
2	ED	--
2	SPD	-1
4	REC	--
16	END	-4
21	STUN	--
STATS COST		17

SKILLS	ROLL	COST
BUREAUCRACY	14>	7
PS ADMINISTRATION	14>	5
SCIENCE: ANTHROPOLOGY	14>	5
SCIENCE: ARCHEOLOGY	13>	4
LANGUAGE: FRENCH (FC)	NA	2
LANGUAGE: BANTU (FC)	NA	3
KS AFRICAN TRIBES	13>	4
KS EARLY AFRICAN TRIBES	13>	4
CULTURE: AFRICAN TRIBES	12>	3
TOTAL SKILLS	=	37

TOTAL CHARACTER COST = 54

DISADVANTAGES	TOTAL
SNOBBISH PRIG	10
VERY BUSY, 14>	10
NEARSIGHTED	5
FREE POINTS & EXP	29
TOTAL DISADVANTAGES	54

LIEUTENANT (HOMICIDE): ARKHAM POLICE

NAME: LT. CASEY GORDON

STAT	NAME	COST
13	STH	3
11	DEX	3
11	CON	2
10	BOD	--
15	INT	5
11	EGO	2
14	PRES	4
14	COM	2
3	PD	--
2	ED	--
2	SPD	-1
5	REC	--
22	END	--
22	STUN	--
STATS COST		20

SKILLS	ROLL	COST
PS POLICEMAN	14>	5
DETECTIVE WORK	14>	7
DEDUCTION	13>	5
POLICE POWERS (LOCAL)	NA	2
BUREAUCRACY	12>	3
STREETWISE	12>	3
AKS ARKHAM	13>	4
AKS MASS. STATE	12>	3
FAMILIARITY w PISTOLS	NA	1
LEVELS: +2 w PISTOL	+2	4
LEVELS: +2 vs RAN w PIST	+2	3
LEVELS: +1 w ALL SKILLS	+1	8
LEVELS: +1 OVERALL	+1	10
TOTAL SKILLS	=	58

DISADVANTAGES	TOTAL
GLORY HOUND	15
WATCHED BY POLICE	10
DISTINCT LOOKS FLASHY CLOTHS 11>	10
EXPERIENCE	52
TOTAL DISADVANTAGES	87

POWERS	COST
RKA 1D6+1, OAF, JAM 14>, 3 CLIPS OF 8 CHARGES EACH, HALF PHASE TO DRAW AND FIRE	9

TOTAL CHARACTER COST = 87

** ** ** ** ** ** ** ** **

SGT (HOMICIDE): ARKHAM POLICE

NAME: SGT. YORK HARRISON

STAT	NAME	COST
14	STH	4
11	DEX	3
13	CON	6
11	BOD	2
13	INT	3
11	EGO	2
13	PRES	3
8	COM	-1
9	PD	2
5	ED	--
3	SPD	9
6	REC	--
26	END	--
25	STUN	--
STATS COST		32

SKILLS	ROLL	COST
PS POLICE WORK	14>	5
POLICE POWERS (LOCAL)	NA	2
DETECTIVE WORK	14>	7
DEDUCTION	13>	5
AKS ARKHAM	13>	4
AKS MASS. STATE	11>	2
BUREAUCRACY	12>	3
STREETWISE	13>	5
FAMILIARITY w FIREARMS	NA	2
MA BOXING: JAB: +2OCV, +1D6		3
BLOCK: MARTIAL BLOCK		4
LOW BLOW: NERVE JAB		4
LEVELS: +1 w PISTOL	+1	2
LEVELS: +1 w MART. ARTS	+1	3
TOTAL SKILLS COST		51

DISADVANTAGES	TOTAL
WATCHED BY POLICE	10
MUST OBEY LAW	15
HUNTING CRIME, 14>	15
EXPERIENCE	54
TOTAL DISADVANTAGES	94

POWERS	COST
RKA 1D6, OAF, 3 CLIPS OF 6 CHARGES JAM ON 15<, HALF PHASE TO DRAW AND FIRE	6
ARMOUR: 4pts PD, 2pts ED; IIF, ACTIVATE 14>, NOT vs AP ATT.	5

TOTAL CHARACTER COST = 94

REPORTER FOR THE ARKHAM DAILY NEWS (CRIME REPORTER)

NAME: MR. CLIFF BARKER

STAT	NAME	COST
13	STH	3
14	DEX	12
14	CON	8
11	BOD	2
14	INT	4
12	EGO	4
13	PRES	3
12	COM	1
10	PD	3
5	ED	--
3	SPD	6
6	REC	--
28	END	--
30	STUN	5
STATS COST		51

DISADVANTAGES	TOTAL
WATCHED BY POLICE	5
HUNTING STORIES 14>	15
DEDICATED REPORTER	10
OVERCONFIDENT	10
WATCHED BY PAPER	5
EXPERIENCE	53
TOTAL DISADVANTAGES =	98

SKILLS	ROLL	COST
PS REPORTER	14>	5
STREETWISE	13>	5
BUREAUCRACY	12>	3
DEDUCTION	13>	5
KS PHOTOGRAPHY	8>	1
FAM w CAMERAS	NA	1
CONTACT: POLICE RECORDS CLERK, (HOMICIDE)	11>	2
CONTACT: STREET PEOPLE	11>	2
AKS ARKHAM	12>	3
LUCK 1D6	NA	5
TOTAL SKILLS COST	=	32

POWERS & ABILITIES	COST
RUNNING +1"	2
END RED ON STH 1/2, (1)	3
ARMOUR, 4pts PD, 2pts ED, IIF ACT 14>, NOT vs AP ATTACKS	5
HHD +2D6, OAF, ACT 14>	3
LIGHT ILLUS. 1D6, 32CHG, ONLY RECORD, FULL PHASE TO USE	1
TOTAL POWERS & ABILITIES COST =	14

TOTAL CHARACTER COST = 98

** ** ** ** ** ** ** ** **

CHIEF OF RESEARCH (DECEASED, WON'T ENTER PLAY)

NAME: DR. EDWARD SCOTT

STAT	NAME	COST
8	STH	-2
9	DEX	-2
8	CON	-4
9	BOD	-2
14	INT	4
12	EGO	4
13	PRES	3
10	COM	--
2	PD	--
2	ED	--
2	SPD	1
4	REC	--
16	END	--
17	STUN	--
STATS COST		1

DISADVANTAGES	TOTAL
DEPENDENT ON NICOTINE 1D6/DAY	5
ARROGANT	10
WATCHED BY MISC LABS	10
DEDICATED TO RESEARCH	15
VULN TO CHEM 1.5*S&B	10
TOTAL DISADVANTAGES	50

SKILLS	ROLL	COST
PS ADMINISTRATION	14>	5
BUREAUCRACY	12>	3
PS DOCTOR	13>	4
PARAMEDIC	13>	5
KS MEDICINE	13>	4
SCIENTIST	NA	3
SCIENCES: PHYSIOLOGY	13>	3
SCIENCES: BIOCHEMISTRY	12>	2
SCIENCES: ORG. CHEMISTRY	12>	2
SCIENCES: INORG. CHEM.	11>	1
PS PSYCHOLOGIST	13>	3
PERK: DOCTORS LICENSE	NA	1
PERK: MISC U. LIBRARY	NA	2
LEVELS: +1 w PROF SKILLS	+1	3
LEVELS: +1 w ALL SKILLS	+1	8
TOTAL SKILLS COST	=	49
TOTAL CHARACTER COST	=	50

ARTIFACTS

BOOK - "THE BOOK BOUND IN PALE LEATHER"

DESCRIPTION: 16" tall/ 10" wide/ 3"thick, leather bound volume with no decorations or external markings. The book feels warm to the touch, flesh temperature. If dropped the book will bruise (and heal) as normal flesh. If cut, it will bleed (red/black blood), clot & heal in a matter of minutes. (It can not be destroyed only disfigured) The pages appear to be the very finest of parchment with rusty brown text & diagrams. A knowledgeable taxidermist, criminologist, or doctor will recognize it as human skin with a blood based ink.

POWERS:The book can provide, to an attuned user, spells of inhuman potency. To summon and control the "hordes of CHTHON". As well as the key to the power necessary to cast the spells. Unknown to the user of the tome, It is slowly taking control of them.

HISTORY: Long ago, in a different dimension, cultists accomplished the complete destruction of their civilization and race. As a reward for His service the human leader of this cult was not destroyed, but transformed by CHTHON itself into the form of a book. This book contained all the knowledge and power needed to bring about the downfall of another world. Cast out at random among all the planes of existence, by chance it came to rest here, on EARTH, in this the dimension of heros. Over the years it has worked upon the minds of the weak and evil. Inspiring such works as the NECRONOMICON and other tomes of insanity. Finally Its work is about to be done. The summoning of the Chthonian hordes to overwhelm this world. May all that is good prevent it.

GAME STATS for "THE BOOK BOUND IN PALE LEATHER"

SPELLS BOUND IN THE BOOK	DESCRIPTION
CREATE GHOUL:	TRANSFORMATION 1D6, CUMULATIVE, AoE RAD, EXTENDED AREA (4"RAD); TEN MIN. TO CAST, GEST & INCANT (0DCV) REQ. SKILL ROLL (MAGIC), OAF, REQ. ONE LIVING SACRIFICE / PERSON TRANSFORMED. EFFECT WILL LAST UNTIL DISPELLED OR CANCELED BY A "GOOD" HOLY RELIC (A PIECE OF THE TRUE CROSS, OSIRIS' AHNK, ETC.)
CREATE FISHMAN	TRANSFORMATION 1D6, CUMULATIVE, AoE RAD, EXTENDED AREA (824"RAD); FULL HOUR TO CAST, GEST & INCANT (0DCV) REQ. SKILL ROLL (MAGIC), OAF, REQ. ONE LIVING SACRIFICE / PERSON TRANSFORMED. EFFECT WILL LAST 24 HOURS OR UNTIL DISPELLED.
RAISE STORM:	CHANGE ENVIRONMENT. CREATE A CHARLES FORT TYPE STORM. SEVENTEEN TIMES INCREASED AREA. AT ZERO ENDURANCE.

SUMMON MINOR CHTHONIAN:	SUMMON A SINGLE MINOR CHTHONIAN (MINUSCULE STAR-SPAWN). THE SPELL TAKES A FULL HOUR TO COMPLETE AND REQUIRES SIX HUMAN SACRIFICES, ONE EVERY TEN MINUTES . IT ALSO TAKES 24pts OF ENDURANCE EVERY TEN MINUTES (DURING THE SACRIFICE).
SUMMON MAJOR CHTHONIAN:	SUMMON A SINGLE MAJOR CHTHONIAN (MINOR STAR-SPAWN). THE SPELL TAKES A FULL HOUR TO COMPLETE AND REQUIRES SIX HUMAN SACRIFICES (OF PURE AND INNOCENT NATURE), AT A RATE OF ONE EVERY TEN MINUTES. IT ALSO TAKES 24pts OF ENDURANCE EVERY TEN MINUTES (DURING THE SACRIFICE). THIS SPELL MUST FOLLOW A SUCCESSFUL SUMMONS OF A MINOR CHTHONIAN.
SUMMON TRUE CHTHONIAN:	SUMMON A SINGLE TRUE CHTHONIAN (MAJOR STAR-SPAWN). THE SPELL TAKES A FULL HOUR TO COMPLETE AND REQUIRES SIX HUMAN SACRIFICES (OF NEWBORN BABES), ONE EVERY TEN MINUTES. IT ALSO TAKES 24pts OF ENDURANCE EVERY TEN MINUTES (DURING THE SACRIFICE). THIS SPELL MUST FOLLOW A SUCCESSFUL SUMMONS OF A MAJOR CHTHONIAN.
SUMMON SHOGGOTH:	SUMMON A SINGLE SHOGGOTH. THE SPELL TAKES A FULL HOUR TO COMPLETE AND REQUIRES SIX HUMAN SACRIFICES, AT A RATE OF ONE EVERY TEN MINUTES. IT ALSO TAKES 24pts OF ENDURANCE EVERY TEN MINUTES (DURING THE SACRIFICE). THIS SPELL MUST FOLLOW A SUCCESSFUL SUMMONS OF A MINOR CHTHONIAN.
CONTROL CHTHONIAN:	MIND CONTROL 40D6, ONLY WORKS ON CREATURES IN THE CHTHONIAN MYTHOS. IF SUCCESSFUL THE CREATURE CONTROLLED WILL NOT BE ABLE TO USE ANY MAGICAL POWERS THEY MAY HAVE. THIS POWER USES 40pts OF ENDURANCE. THIS SPELL CAN ONLY BE ATTEMPTED **AS** THE BEING IS SUMMONED, AND CAN ONLY BE ATTEMPTED ONCE PER CREATURE SUMMONED. IT TAKES TEN MINUTES TO CAST THIS SPELL.
CREATE SPACE WARP:	DIMENSIONAL TRAVEL, TO CHTHONS' REALM. USABLE BY OTHERS (ONE AT A TIME). AREA OF EFFECT RADIUS (10") POWER AT ZERO ENDURANCE, ALWAYS ON

TAP POWER: RECOVERY ON ENDURANCE POOL, 40END PER PHASE; ONLY RECOVER DURING PHASE IN WHICH SEVERE BODY DAMAGE IS INFLICTED (5pts OR MORE) WITHIN A 20" RADIUS.

ENDURANCE POOL: ENDURANCE ???pts.; LOOSES ALL ENDURANCE AFTER 10 IDLE MINUTES.

SIDE EFFECTS

MENTAL SUBVERSION MIND CONTROL ON BEARER (USER) 20D6, END RED TO (0), FULLY UNDETECTABLE ROLL EVERY TIME POWERS OF BOOK ARE USED / OR ONCE PER WEEK (WHICHEVER IS GREATER). LIMIT: ONLY USE ONE ACTIVE POINT OF MIND CONTROL PER; ACTIVE USE OF THE BOOK / OR FULL WEEK THE BOOK IS POSSESSED (CLOSE PROXIMITY ONLY). WITH EACH USE OR WEEK BEING CUMULATIVE. EFFECT IS TO CONVERT THE BEARER INTO A WORSHIPER OF CHTHON.

KNIFE - "THE BONE WHITE KNIFE"

DESCRIPTION: A knife made out of an unknown white material. Nearly 14" long from pointed tip to curved hilt. The blade is an unsharpened tine with a 2" diameter and an irregular triangular cross-section. The smooth hilt resembles nothing so much as the root of a huge tooth. Which it is.

POWERS: A most dangerous weapon is the white knife. Capable of piercing most any armour, it seems to actually draw out the life force of anyone struck with it. There is one case on record of a researcher who no more than drew a drop of blood from his thumb. Yet he was in hospital, near death, for three months. The knife is linked to the BOOK. When wielded by the holder of the BOOK, the knife will kill almost anything it pierces. Transferring all of the life force to the BOOK. This is the only way that power to cast the final summoning spells can be garnered. The process obviously destroys the soul of the being killed.

HISTORY: When CHTHON created and sent out the book to seek an new world to ravage it sent with two items. One of his own teeth, and a Cloak fashioned out of one of his own minions. Over the eons the knife wandered the world creating madness, and cultivating evil. Inspiring blood sacrifice in many peoples. While destroying whole civilizations in fits of hunger. It was most recently found by a curio seeker, in the ruined castle rumored to belong to the legendary Duke of Chi'in.

GAME STATS for: "THE BONE WHITE KNIFE"

POWERS OF THE KNIFE	DESCRIPTION
BLADE OF DEATH:	HtH KA 4D6, 2 LEVELS OF ARMOUR PIERCING END RED TO (0); OAF linked to POWER DRAIN: 'RECOVERY' 4D6, END RED TO (0), RECOVERY FROM DRAIN ONCE PER WEEK
SIDE EFFECTS	
MENTAL SUBVERSION	MIND CONTROL ON BEARER (USER) 12D6, END RED TO (0), FULLY UNDETECTABLE ROLL EVERY TIME POWERS OF BOOK ARE USED / OR ONCE PER WEEK (WHICHEVER IS GREATER). LIMIT: ONLY USE ONE ACTIVE POINT OF MIND CONTROL PER; ACTIVE USE OF THE BOOK / OR FULL WEEK THE BOOK IS POSSESSED (CLOSE PROXIMITY ONLY). WITH EACH USE OR WEEK BEING CUMULATIVE. EFFECT IS TO CONVERT THE BEARER INTO A WORSHIPER OF CHTHON.

CLOAK - "THE SERPENT CLOAK"

DESCRIPTION: The Cloak is made of a strange dark-greenish leather. Looking like nothing so much as six snake skins grafted together for several inches at their tips. It best drapes over a person with the two longest center strips down the back with each shorter edge pair hanging over the shoulders from behind. When worn the six strips will hang to the ground, and twitch with the smallest movement of the wearer. When worn by the bearer of the BOOK the strips will lift and writhe about the person of the wearer. When the wearer bears both the BOOK and the KNIFE then the strips animate fully and become six tentacles at the command of the wearer.

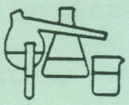
POWERS: If put on and worn, the cloak will provide an unusual amount of protection. Enabling a normal person to withstand a heavy blow from a sword, a rifle bullet, or even a gas cutting torch. When worn by the bearer of the BOOK the cloak acts as an almost perfect armour against corporeal damage. When animated by both the BOOK and the KNIFE the strips become real, full featured tentacles at the full command of the wearer. They have the strength and physical capabilities of a major star spawn of chthon.

HISTORY: To ensure the correct usage of the book and knife CHTHON sent one of its servitors in the form of a cloak. If the BOOK or KNIFE falls out of sight, or fail to advance their task for too great a time then the cloak will move to set things right. Either by influencing those near it or by partially animating and moving the BOOK and, or KNIFE.

GAME STATS for "THE SERPENT CLOAK"

POWERS OF THE CLOAK ALONE	DESCRIPTION
MYSTIC DEFENSE	ARMOUR 20pts PD; AND 20pts ED
POWERS OF THE CLOAK AND BOOK	
MYSTIC DEFENSE	ARMOUR 20pts PD; AND 20pts ED DAMAGE REDUCTION 3/4 PD AND ED RESISTANT HEALING 2D6, ALWAYS ON POWER DEFENCE +10pts. MENTAL DEFENCE +5pts.
POWERS OF THE CLOAK, BOOK, AND KNIFE	
MYSTIC DEFENSE	ARMOUR 20pts PD; AND 20pts E DAMAGE REDUCTION 3/4 PD AND ED RESISTANT HEALING 2D6, ALWAYS ON POWER DEFENCE +10pts. MENTAL DEFENCE +5pts.
TENTACLES	EXTRA LIMBS +6 (TENTACLES) AND STRETCHING 2" AT 0 END
STRENGTH	TOTAL STRENGTH OF 75 AT 0 END
RENDING ABILITY	HtH KA 3D6 (6d6 w STH) AT 0 END
LIFE SUPPORT	FULL LIFE SUPPORT
ADDITIONAL ABILITIES (NOT USABLE BY THE WEARER)	
RUNNING	+2" OF RUNNING (TOTAL OF 2")
SWIMMING	+4" OF SWIMMING (TOTAL OF 4")
CLIMBING	CLIMB ON A 24>, (2" OF CLIMBING)
LUCK	6D6 OF LUCK, ONLY TO BE RECOVERED FROM A SPOT IT CAN'T GET ITSELF OUT OF. CAN ONLY BE CHECKED ONCE PER CENTURY.
SIDE EFFECTS (ON POSSESSOR)	
MENTAL SUBVERSION	TELEPATHY 6D6, FULLY UNDETECTABLE, AT 0 END, ONLY TO "SUGGEST" THAT THE BEARER FIND MOVE AND USE THE OTHER TWO ITEMS. CAN ONLY EFFECT AN EVIL OR UNBALANCED MIND. ONLY EFFECTIVE AFTER A FULL YEAR OF POSSESSION

The Chem. Geek



by Walter Gwathney

Before I get down to the business at hand, I have an announcement to make (drum roll). Coming soon (I hope) to the University of Georgia library, Walt's masters thesis! I know everybody is eagerly awaiting a chance to check it out, so I'm not including any of it here (and an overwhelming sigh of relief was heard from the readership). Now you ask, what is in this issue? Well, I thought I'd start with my first ever mailing comments (yes, it has gotten cooler, but Hell hasn't frozen over completely), a few gaming ideas that haven't made it past the drawing board stage and finally a few selections of my poetical works (once requested by Jessica of Hemispheres fame).

Mailing Comments :

Mike --> Eagerly awaiting more Mard and Castle of Death.

Sonia & Kevin --> Couldn't put it down. 5 out of 5 stars. Not only was your article very entertaining, but it revived my interest in C-o-C.

Nicky & Jackie --> A point to ponder on class play and spellcasters in particular. If you have a novice player or a veteran that's not a good spellcaster, invite them to try a little arena combat using a spellcaster. This little exercise should build three important skills; spell awareness, spell choosing and spell management. Why the arena teaches these skills is the player must know what the spells do and the parameters of the spells are so he can choose the ones necessary to survive, and once he has chosen his spells he must use them effectively or end up dead.

Pat & Carl --> Judging by the quotes given for archetypical players and gamemasters, none of the archetypicals seem very pleasant to be around. I'm would be interested in a list of what you would consider exceptional players and gamemasters.

A.J. & Jess --> A.J., I play and enjoy **Diplomacy**, **War & Peace** and **Civilization**. I would like play one of the games listed above, but due to limited free time I doubt I could ever venture one.

Jon (Hanna) --> I do conversions for a living. So when I game, I have a preference for playing a single game straight up, instead of playing something that is a blend of many games and I have to end up doing a lot of number crunching. To be honest, I'd rather play **Runequest**, but the system is unwieldy for mass combat and the generation of stats for encounters is time consuming. Thoughts By Sersus; the upside is that it's a source of entertaining reading (a highlight article from issue to issue), and the downside is that through this one characters perception of a world, it is brought vividly to life, and what makes that bad is not being able to experience the places and people depicted in the article first hand.

Jon (Monk) --> **Champions** heros versus dread Cthulhu and his minions. I like the concept. Being a **Champions** novice, I don't fell qualified to make any serious or even half-ass criticisms, but I'd be more than willing to help you play-test your ideas.

Paul --> I'm glad you could use the map. Keep watching this slot, my gaming taste run in cycles and sooner or later I might hit on something you're interested in.

Deena & Keith --> Keith how about a game of **40K** sometime. Answers for the questionnaire: 1 : no 2 : no & no 3 no & no

Peter --> Sounds as if the postgraduation trip was a success. I think I was an anonymous freshman at one time. Which goes to prove, a little persistence anything can happen.

Greg --> I like the cliff-hanging endings you use every mailing. One question, do you already know how this is going to end or do you make it up as you go?

Rob --> Welcome to Motive. A well thought out short scenario in its own right with long ranging possibilities in a campaign situation.

Gil --> I'm glad you could make use of the map.

Stewart & Chad --> Interesting **Champions** campaign. About the Database, I'm not sure how well it would go over or the financial problems involved, but I'm think your privacy would suffer and depending on how much you value your privacy, possibly your sanity as well.

John --> Welcome to Motive. I like the title and the way you did it. Thanks for the new character sheets.

Darrell --> I like the way you set up your campaign. I think you succeeded in your original goals, and managed to produce an exciting campaign on the side.

Best Laid Plans or Things I Thought of and haven't Finished

Jagd Machen auf den Roten Deutscher

A Space 1889 adventure/ campaign

You are a privateer for the Crown of England. Since you are having such good luck in dealing with the Martians, the Foreign Office has entrusted you with the fate of the colony on Mars. Intelligence has learned that a German inventor and naval officer has made his way from Venus to Mars. Along with trade and military treaties, he brings with him a new terror weapon, the magnetic torpedo. If the full power of this weapon is ever realized, the English navy is doomed and the colony as well. Your mission is to hunt down his ship and neutralize the man and his weapon.

The Tree of Life

A Space Hulk and 40K campaign

Long before anyone can remember the Tree of Life has been drifting in the warp. Once in a while, she will materialize in real space. When she does, she jettisons a small hulk or two for the unwary to find and take home as prizes. With the claiming of the hulk as a prize another world dies. For the cargo carried in each of the small hulks are the alien genestealers. The Tree of Life has materialized over another doomed world, but this time it didn't vanish back into the warp. The time has come for humanity to strike a blow against an ancient foe. The terminators from four marine chapters are to assault the Tree of Life and end this plague on Humanity once and for all.

Poetic Stuff

Pirates

July 1985

Flip flop sea to sea the pirates
Plunder vessels for ill gotten booty.
Port to port they haul their crates
Entering by stealth to avoid the duty.
They trade their treasures at the haven
With others who plow the sea for a hoard.
Back to sea for what they are craving,
They hunt down another to board
And quick as light they break the rendezvous.
Sometimes the authorities catch a boat
And seize the loot, ship, captain and crew,
But pirates still remain afloat.

Why do men take the great risk
For treasures found on little black disk?

Helen

July 1988

Why I, with heart full of pride,
Sail and die for Menelaus' bride?

A sinful lust for beauty beyond compare.
I sail with a thousand other ships,
For I have seen the smile that snares.
I long for a kiss from her lips,
A smile with each caress and loving embrace.
Feelings from the heart and mind conflict and confuse
As I tighten the strap on the last vambrace.
The Trojans sally forth and the battle ensues.
What a fool, I am to die
Grasping for unattainable love and glory.
For me she will never cry
As I expire before mighty Troy.

Mirage

June 1989

Amid the rolling dunes and burning sand
Midway between the cool forest and sea
Yesterday dances with broken dreams.
Strong men chance the barren land.
Each one searching for a fabled treasure
Lusting after a deeply buried desire
Disregarding the danger in the land of fire.
Overhead the carrion bird foreshadows the future.

Must one continue to pursue a folly
Reasoning there is always hope
In finding what's desired in the next valley.
Deliriously chasing a dream to the next slope.
Getting where the dream used to be and
Ending up holding a handful of sand?

Is it Dawn or Is It Twilight

April 1984

As I rested beneath a tree
Gazing over the grassy plain,
He appeared heading toward me,
Tawny cat with brimming mane.

Cat who carries a frame that's beat,
Eyes all glazed and walk too weary,
Cease your wandering and take a seat
That you might answer my query.

It is said in tales of old
Darkness never envolped your pride.
Young at heart with stature bold,
Cubs were numerous along your side.

Eagles, bears and jackals have charged
Upon your pride attempting to wrest
Power, fame and might which you possessed,
But you foiled them with feverish zest.

AMPERION"S THOUGHTS

BOLTS of BEDEVILMENT

Michael Steven Schapira

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Welcome to another issue of **Amperion's Thoughts.** This time out we will have more of the city of Mard and maybe some of the Castle of Death. Of course it is Friday (November 9th) morning at 1:15 and I am going to Asheville this morning for the weekend, so who knows what I'll get around to tonight. I had planned to give a brief bit about another of my aften insulted characters.....Biophase; however I think it will be sufficient to say that the nickname everyone used for him was Captain Aids. There will not be a puzzle this issue (been busy lately), but of course there will be mailing comments. The Motive survey this time will be short, a brief bit about comics.

Actually there is no time like the present to start, so ....the favorite comics were.................Batman (any/various/special)....7 votes
Justice Leagues (any)......6
Watchmen/Lone Wolf and Cub/Elementals......5
The Tick.........4
Grendel/Cherry Poptart/Animal Man/What If?...3

The rest of the comics were extremely varied, and ranged from Marvel (15 titles) to DC (14 titles) to independants (31 titles) new to old. There was a variety on most of the sheets, so it seems that though people may scoff at Marvel, there are still some titles worth the exorbitant prices of modern comics. It seems that the traditional comic teams are not out yet, but they are being adapted to our times. The newer, either very serious or terribly humorous are growing in popularity, while the bash 'em up heroes are fading (though the Incredible Hulk was on my list). In any case most everyone filled in the section (at least partly), so I guess we can say that although society at large thinks comics are silly; we know better than them, and allow ourselves to enjoy what we like, whether they approve or not. (After all, most of them are silly twits anyway.....right?!!!)

Mailing comments..........

Editor.....Neither Commie nor scum (ie pepsi) have anything to do with the red of my paper. Please do not forget that in the future.

Fishy Bits...Nice, but too long. How about a module format, with a few paragraphs at the end highlighting the anecdotes encountered.

Druid/Witch.....No, I do not know how tough it is to copy from RED paper. I'll try to come up with a solution for next time I do one. As for tourneys, the ones I've enountered so far have not been really noteworthy. On the other hand I really prefer to game with people I know pretty well. At the conventions I have gone to, the players were certainly into what you call 'grandstanding', so I have tended to get involved in games with my friends, and found the atmosphere better, and the adventures superior. It makes me feel that the tournament aspect of Cons is a waste, but I must say that it is a little refreshing to meet other gamers, and socialize in the off-hours.

Spouses.......Musky interesting. Gamemaster types....unfortunately I have met a few of the types mentioned since leaving my old group.

Hemispheres...Interesting world, good to know that others use lots of them (as do I). Bring on some more.

Tail of the Monkey Man......Pardon my forgetfulness last issue. On the issue of simple vs. complex I am a strong believer in games being only complicated enough, to keep out those who cannot really imagine well enough to play. Sersus....thanks for the continuing info on Edge. How about a bit on the better places (and perhaps some recommendations on what) to eat.

White Noise......Is it just me, or do Major, Minor, and Miniscule spawn of Cthulhu all look alike??? Papal Bull.....hmmmm.

Tales of the Brass Monkey....What is that Russian message to Wayne? I bet it is some kind of ex-commie plot against me.....right?

Secrets Vulc. Poetry....What do you mean "Is **AMPERION** supposed to be funny?" And as for gender in gaming.....GET REAL. To answer your questions 1) NO 2) NO 3) NO (NO) (By the way, you were just reading the thesis, not writing it, right?) I suppose there are some people who would treat the women differently, but in my experience the only ones who get taken advantage of are those who really don't assert themselves at all. As for the various domestic things you attribute to their bahavior, hostesses are sometimes less than open with their kitchen. But hey, I'll pit my kitchen skills against most of them any day.

Blue View....Continue the interesting articles.

Snake of 4ever....Ok story so far, perhaps a little melodramatic, but then I never had a problem with Shatner's big scenes on Star Trek.

Recently Uncovered.....Looks like there will be some unusual stuff from you to come. Looking forward to the reading.

Game/ A Foot....Any chance we shall see Paul Thibideaux??

Death/Fanatics..... COOL Graphic of yourself Null. Knuckles seems to be another of your characters that seem to come to life in the merest reading (I can only imagine how amusing he is in a gaming session.)

Furthermore, I shall not have a mature response to an infantile response to criticism, so PPPPHHHFFFFTTTTT!!!! (And the customary accompanying spittle.

Cybertonto.....Interesting character sheets. Look forward to more, but how about a little more of the stuff with your own particular character, as opposed to merely technical and equipment oriented stuff.

Column in Search....Curious... looking forward to playing some of your Champions.....perhaps at MOC VI??

Well, enough of that comment stuff.....anyone ready for a new character?

My newest character is a fantasy type...warrior. Born the 4th son of a craftsman, **TENEMON** is an 18 year old human. Standing 6' 8" and weighing 205#, it is no suprise he has a strength that would let him kill an average unarmored man with one punch. (I won't give stats since the game he is in is the GMs personal creation, but I will say that I rolled an 18/96 to start with, so the stat is high.) This unethical young man goes by "Ten" and as a sign of his illiteracy he uses the number '10' as his personal emblem (and it is painted in large red characters on his shield. The first night of play was intended as little to no action (meet, get a quest etc.) and I was a bit put off by the way the GM put us in a no-win scenario that the characters would have probably not gotten into (ie going out after curfew). But by the end of the night we were in a crypt, and had found a sarcophagus guarded by a rune. The low-level mystic in our group was able to say that the rune had something to do with color, so Tenemon handed his shield to a party member and bade them all back off. When I touched the rune all my stuff that I had on me was turned RED. (Damn good thing I gave the shield to someone else to hold). In addition to my stuff, I was red. And I don't mean my hair. I mean my hair, my skin, my teeth, even the whites of my eyes.!! At least I got the satisfaction of taking the gem-encrusted dagger that was in the sarcophagus for my own. One of the other players said that it was probably worth enough to get the color removed, but I laughed, as it is an easy way for my fame to spread, as **TENEMON the RED**. In week two I actually got to participate in combat. It was fun, and I did get to cut a wolf (were???) in half with a single stroke. Of course I had to be given a little humility, so the next wolf jumped my nearly unprotected throat, and it was good to have a 'cleric' in the party. Later I went into a r4oom and was attacked by an unmanned dagger. After suffering 9 hits the abdomen I was finally able to grasp the dagger (by the hilt no less) and it stopped attacking. I put it in my sheathe and it has been there since. Perhaps this week I will see if it is now under my control, or just biding its time. In addition to my living dagger and red everything, I also carry a very nice crowbar, which I have named 'FIDO'. I also intend to spread the myth that it used to be a great big wardog. The rest of the tale is that my ex-boss wizard didn't like me sleeping with his daughter, so he zapped my dog. I think one of the party members may help the legend spread, but the other 3 characters seem to be a bit stuffy. Finally I carry around a big backpack and lots of equipment in an adventure where the GM is very 'reality' conscious.....so every time we go to combat I have to either take a big negative the whole fight, or let the foe have initiative until I can get the pack off.

More about the world of Mard....

Some of you may wonder why the gnomes are gone from the world. I will only say that one man is responsible, and since some Motive people know him I will stop there. In any case, they were not all that useful in the first place, and I enjoy the fact that an entire race and its gods could be eliminated from the game and not upset the game balance. Maybe someday I'll do a short campaign in which there is a mystically powered attempt to revive the race. Maybe not, but maybe.

As for magic, I said before that the world is a bit Monty Haul-ish (or is Monty Hall-ish......remember "Let's Make a Deal"?). There are plenty of magic items, in various levels of power. Although they are common I try to keep them from overcoming the importance of the characters themselves.

Originally I had drawn a map of the continent and named it "TRAK", but due to my total lack of artistry had to abandon it (too many jokes about the resemblance of the map to a facial profile).

As for the city of Mard.....The map I included last time is 1 of 4, I have drawn so far. I have done a detailed map of the interior of most buildings on three of the pages. And rolled up (or arbitrarily set) the stats of all the people appropriate to it. They are equipped and I have already rolled the date they shall die, barring character intrusion. Unfortunately I see that it is almost 4am, so I think I shall go to Kinko's and print and copy. Next time I shall (make that **will**) include a few of the more amusing people of the city, perhaps another map, and some of the new creatures that live in the city. And who knows what else.....

Till then........keep writing and reading and remember that procrastination does not pay off. And hey, if you hate your job....be happy you don't have mine!!

Fishy Bits

Kevin Ingle 2820 Westfield Road, Charlotte, NC 28209 Sonia Handforth-Kome

🦀 Hello, Hello, welcome to another edition of the amazing writing seafood creatures. In a complete change of direction, I shall attempt to be brief. 🦀

First off, 🦀's BITS about MAILING COMMENTS:

Amperion: Woo Woo (Whistle) Huzza Huzza. Way to go, dude. I very mukh enjoyed your tale of Yorikk, Khief of the AEsir. (What was in the battlebrew?) By the way, you spelled antikapating wrong. It's antkipating...What's wrong with the name Mardlumber?

Nicky: I really have only once had the experience of a player's playing his character's personality to the detriment of the game. Unfortunately, most of the difficulties I have encountered in games comes from players NOT roleplaying, rather than overplaying their roles. However, on the one occasion (I was gamesmaster) when I encountered a player who was determined to disrupt the game and annoy the other players with his histrionics and generally unhelpful interpretation of his character, I have to admit my first/lasting impulse/desire was to smack the player in question. After gentle (verbal) prodding by both me and other players - prodding intended only to direct the player toward useful action within his character's skills and outlook - we all gave up and simply ignored him.

For the most part, there are many games on the market now that do not have clear "class" distinctions. Players can develop very complex characters, and good players will always attempt to have background development for their characters that explains the odd collection of skills they have chosen. When so much time is given to the generation of a history, psyche, profession(s) for a character, it is understandable that sometimes the urge to show off some of the otherwise hidden work will cause players to roleplay for the sheer fun of it, and to no useful end. This is what taverns, home bases, camping for the night, in general campaign down-time is for. However, if a player, for instance, having designed a fighter character with a strong desire to right injustice and protect the innocent from harm, is so busy espousing the reasons for the character's beliefs that he/she fails to act when a dragon flies down and captures a virgin, then that player is NOT roleplaying. If a character designed with a high skill in languages refuses to even look at an ancient manuscript recently uncovered and not seen by man for over 2000 years, then that character is NOT roleplaying. Having a skill (particularly the core skill(s) of the character) implies not only the character's willingness to act on the skill, it implies that the character desires to act on the skill. Otherwise, why would he/she have it? Therefore, any player who overlooks or avoids the opportunities to do what his/her character does best, even if the reason for doing so is to indulge in "character acting", is NOT roleplaying. In fact, in many cases I am sure it is questionable whether the character would ever unburden him/herself of whatever deep dark secret(s) helped form his/her psyche.

On the other hand, if players want to roleplay amongst themselves in a non-disruptive manner, I'm all for it. For instance, in a recent Champions game, one of the characters, Typhon, was off on a reconnaissance mission for which he was particularly suited. He sent his "spirit form" ahead, and left his body in the care of two of his team mates. His team mates were both very big, very strong fighter types, both of whom thought this guy was a wimp. Additionally, one of the teammates actually had the psych dis-ad "practical joker". When Typhon returned to his body, he became conscious of a sharp pain in his foot. After putting out the matches, he could not understand why his teammates persisted in chuckling all through his report. He finally discovered that he was wearing several very pretty hair ribbons. Meanwhile, his team mates took the information he brought back, and implemented phase two of "the plan". Everyone had fun, the game was played to the point, and some character development was achieved as well.

Oh hell, so much for being brief.

Jackie: See above.

Pat: I'm afraid that what we have here is a failure to communicate. I did not mean to say that short CoC games are any more or less likely to end with the party mauled to death or blithering insane than longer CoC games. I meant to say that, in general, CoC games are at least marginally more likely to end up with some or all of the party mauled to death or somewhat insane than most other games. However, I wanted to point out that death and insanity/total insanity are not necessarily the results of either a short or a long CoC game. As for creating a non-fatal tournament length game; piece of cake. I have two already. The folks in Athens have played one of them, and not only was no one killed, no one even suffered serious SAN loss. The second game is a sequel to the first, using the same characters, different setting. I look forward to running it as well-it is also a potentially low/no fatality game (forget you read that, you Athens crowd). The point is, done correctly, death is a real possibility in CoC, but it should not be expected to occur.

By the way, Muskie looks a little like a Deep One. Better keep him away from potential cultists, or he'll have a following of long-robed, wild-eyed fanatics all chanting "Cthulhu, Cthulhu" and trying to mate with him.

Carl: Ok, you showed all the bad guys, now how about a list of archetypal GM's that lists all the good traits? I agree with you on your assessment of simple vs. complex game systems. Actually, I see that several people in Motive this time agree with you.

AJ: What is a Niss? What game system do you use/if you use your own game system, please elaborate. Is the origin story for your Norselands the same as the mythological origin? etc. etc. (There is interest, in other words. Pray continue.)...A church of Kerak? Isn't that a little like "individualists of the world, unite!"?

Jonathan: Good article on the Minutemen. Sersus, for shame. So they don't fill up with rocks and dirt, of course.

JDM: Hey! Watch it with those Cthulhu cracks, bud. "campaign matters must be balanced for the heros (sic) to win in the end or you had better switch to a 'CALL OF CTHULHU' campaign." Humphf. See "Pat" above, and my article Motive #2. So there, nyaah. Actually, have you considered having your nasties do an automatic (or aromatic) presence attack (command: either "run away" or "freeze in fear")?

Paul: You forgot to mention that in Space:1889, being British is almost a must. (Notable exception, Stewart's cowboy). You can have sexual innuendo flying about, but it has to be very innuendo, and not overtly sexual.

Deena: Speaking as a female (something I rarely do) rather than as an individual; I have rarely encountered gender related difficulties in my dealings with any gamer crowd or individual. Once, in high school (I was 15), one of our gaming crowd insisted on making very disgusting, very sexist comments about the state of various player and character bosoms. I emptied a punch bowl on his head, which I have to admit was a sort of crude and extreme reaction, but it got the point across, and he desisted. That same crowd produced a joker who persisted in calling me "hebe", "christ killer", "yid" and "kike". I ignored him. Interestingly, that person has since died of a brain disorder-perhaps part of the source of his unbalanced outlook. I have also experienced gender discrimination from other women, who seem to think that since I am a woman, I will think, act and react in certain preordained ways.

However, aforementioned notwithstanding, I have found that in general, gamers are more polite and socially sensitive than "the average person". I think this is due in part to the fact that in order to roleplay well, gamers must investigate every facet of their characters. Gender, color, height, weight, physical prowess, physical beauty, handedness, ethnic origin, educational background, religious orientation, sexual orientation, etc. are all facets of a complete (and unique) individual. In order to roleplay well (and live well, for that matter), all facets must be examined and understood. Concentrating on only one or two facets leads to a lopsided, unbalanced character, and poor roleplaying (see Jackie & Nicky's comments in Motive #3, among others). In "real" life, such concentration also leads to imbalance. Courtesy is one mark of a balanced individual behaving in a balanced manner, which I guess means that perhaps in general, since most gamers I know are more courteous than average, they are also more balanced than average.

Then again, perhaps I've just been lucky.

Peter: We gave my dad canned road kill for Christmas one year. Georgia’s finest. (Actually, I think it was just regular potted meat [you know, lips, ears, tails, etc.] with the label changed, but don’t tell him that - he loved it.)

Greg: More, please.

Rob: Hello, greetings, welcome. Thanks for the scenario - could you tell us more about Twilight:2000? Your interpretations of the various governments, for instance. Thanks, dude.

Gil: Morally uprights have a tendency to climb into anyone’s pajamas that they think aren’t like them (and morally upright). Really, the only solution is to shoot them. The pond is still open, and your character is still warm. Perhaps by the time you read this, you will have gotten wet. In other news, have you heard of a game called “bubble the justice”? The dictionary says: “‘Cheat the magistrate’ - a nineteenth-century game of nine holes. From *bubble* ‘dupe’.”

Null: No more than you overused “milieu”. Or “millieu”, for that matter. (I’m sorry, I’ll stop). Re: Knuckles; Wow. Well developed, really a wonderful character. I would like to meet Knuckles in a game.

Void: “Deep fried breaded lobster”? Eeeuuuuuhhhh.

John: Hi John. Does having a mental spike hurt? How do you get one of those implanted? Also, what kind of mental paper do you use?

Dawoo: Interesting idea, giving everyone essentially the same powers. Your game description was (mercifully) brief (I can’t read my own game synopsis because it gives me eyestrain), so please tell me, was this approach successful in bringing out the roleplayer in the players? 🦀

Now, 🐸 presents BITS about: musings from someone in R&D at Computer:

Today's scientific question is: What in the world is electricity? And where does it go after it leaves the toaster?

Here is a simple experiment that will teach you an important electrical lesson: On a cool dry day, scuff your feet along a carpet, then reach your hand into a friend's mouth and touch one of his dental fillings. Did you notice how your friend twitched violently and cried out in pain? This teaches us that electricity can be a very powerful force, but we must never use it to hurt others unless we need to learn an important electrical lesson.

It also teaches us how an electrical circuit works. When you scuffed your feet, you picked up batches of "electrons", which are very small objects that carpet manufacturers weave into carpets so that they will attract dirt. The electrons travel through your bloodstream and collect in your finger, where they form a spark that leaps to your friend's filling, then travels down to his feet and back into the carpet, thus completing the circuit.

Amazing electronic fact: If you scuffed your feet long enough without touching anything, you would build up so many electrons that your finger would explode! But this is nothing to worry about unless you have carpeting.

Although we modern persons tend to take our electric lights, radios, mixers, etc. for granted, hundreds of years ago people did not have any of these things, which is just as well because there was no place to plug them in. Then along came the first Electrical Pioneer, Benjamin Franklin, who flew a kite in an electrical storm and received a serious electrical shock. This proved that lightning was powered by the same force as carpets, but it also damaged Franklin's brain so severely that he started speaking only in incomprehensible maxims, such as, "A penny saved is a penny earned". Eventually he invented the post office.

After Franklin came a herd of Electrical Pioneers whose names have become part of our electrical technology: Myron Volt, Mary Louise Amp, James Watt, Bobby Transformer, etc. These pioneers conducted many important electrical experiments - - Among them, Galvani discovered (this is the truth) that when he attached two different kinds of metal to the leg of a frog an electrical current developed and the frog's leg kicked, even though it was no longer attached to the frog, which was dead anyway. Galvani's discovery led to enormous advances in the field of amphibian medicine.

Today, skilled veterinary surgeons can take a frog that has been seriously injured or killed, implant pieces of metal into its muscles, and watch it hop back into the pond just like a normal frog, except for the fact that it sinks like a stone.

But the greatest Electrical Pioneer of them all was Thomas Edison, who was a brilliant inventor despite the fact that he had little formal education and lived in New Jersey. Edison's first major invention in 1877 was the phonograph, which could soon be found in thousands of American homes, where it basically sat until 1923, when the record was invented. But Edison's greatest achievement came in 1879 when he invented the electric company. Edison's design was a brilliant adaptation of the simple electrical circuit. The electric company sends electricity through a wire to a customer, then immediately gets the electricity back through another wire, then, (this is the brilliant part) sends it right back to the customer again.

This means that an electric company can sell a customer the same batch of electricity thousands of times a day and never get caught, since very few customers take the time to examine their electricity closely, In fact, the last year any new electricity was generated was 1937. The electric companies have been merely reselling it ever since, which is why they have so much time to apply for rate increases.

Today, thanks to men like Edison and Franklin, and frogs like Galvani's, we receive almost unlimited benefits from electricity. For example, in the past decade scientists have developed the laser, an electronic appliance so powerful that it can vaporize a bulldozer 2,000 yards away, yet so precise that doctors can use it to perform delicate operations to the human eyeball, provided they remember to change the power setting from 'Vaporize Bulldozer' to ' Delicate'.

Next: 🦀's BITS about: *"Would you believe what some people will do for a job ?"*

I started a Champions game for the Charlotte gaming group. The premise is that Charlotte didn't get the NFL franchise, so the City is stuck with a whole bunch of land and a stadium contract, but no team. They settle for the next best thing - a superhero team. The city and county councils both think this is a potentially good idea, since they are being pressured by threat of federal intervention to build several large jails inside or in the immediate vicinity of Charlotte, and it wouldn't hurt to have some super help in keeping the criminals in line. However, the councils and citizens are concerned about the damage and potential danger of having a superhero team anywhere near the City, not to mention right downtown. A contract is therefore drawn up by some of the most uptight corporate lawyers and bankers available (and Charlotte has a bunch of them, believe you me). In order to join the team, the heroes were requested to sign. I passed around copies of the contract - one per player, and every player was requested to actually sign the contract as their Hero ID, or the ID they wished to be employed under. UNBELIEVABLY, everyone did, almost without a peep. The summary of the contract follows:

Hero receives standard group health plan, major medical, and dental plan. Salary starts at $21,120 per annum, with a review required yearly. The first year, there will be a 3 month review to determine hero suitability. Hero receives room and board, and agrees to spend at least 4 hours per month on "monitor duty" at hero base. Hero can participate in 401k plan. Hero can participate in disability plan.

All activities that are acceptable or required, and that earn money (ie, television commercials, rewards, etc.) will have their proceeds split between the hero and the City as follows: The City will receive 20% gross proceeds, the hero will receive 80% minus taxes and penalties.

There will be research facilities emplaced within the hero base. Heroes must agree to participate in experiments and aid scientists to the best of their abilities. Heroes will receive 3% of net profits made due to hero aid.

Heroes deduct cost of repairs from salary, unless he does all of the following that are applicable:

1. Hero helps to the full extent of his ability to clean up/repair damage
2. Hero can prove all damage was caused by a super villain/super villains in an unprovoked or unrelated attack.
3. Hero can prove damage was unavoidable to protect innocents.
4. Hero agrees to perform services for City for no pay until damage cost is met.

Hero group is to be regarded as a special extension of the police force. They will be licensed as weapons, and be expected to be as cognizant of the law as their fellow officers. All rules and restrictions pertaining to the police force also pertain to the Hero Group.

Hero must agree to maintain a public image in keeping with that which the City of Charlotte wishes to project. If hero is proved to be engaged in immoral or unscrupulous activities, the City reserves the right to terminate employment and benefits immediately, and to prosecute to the fullest extent of the law.

Heroes without a Secret ID are required to be fingerprinted, and to give their social security number at time of employment.

Heroes with a Secret ID are required to obtain a social security number for their secret ID. This number will be referenced as being a secondary number, and taxes will be withheld at a higher rate unless the hero is willing to give his non-hero SS number as a link (in which case, taxes will be withheld at a normal rate for his combined hero/non-hero income). Additionally, heroes with a Secret ID will be required to undergo a retinal scan. Said scan will be kept confidential, and will only be used as identification if the hero is required to testify in court, or is arrested for any reason.

A hero with a Secret ID will be held responsible for all actions taken by anyone who appears to be him, unless he can prove his uninvolvement in the disputed incident(s).

As Bugs would say "what ultramaroons!" The PC's already owe $28,000, mostly due to medical bills incurred when a superbaddy was injured during questioning while incarcerated. They have earned back about - $3600.00 through the sale of a large number of banana cream pies that appeared mysteriously in their headquarters, but those profits were mostly eaten up by shipping and handling, marketing, and sales tax. Shades of The Space Merchants indeed. 🦀

Ok, now it's time for 🐸's 𝔅 𝔍 𝔏 𝔖 stolen (and slightly edited) from Dan Camper's (who works for Computer in California) computer while he was out getting coffee (hey, it's something to do, right?):

It's Tuesday, and it's dark. I know it's dark because I have my headlights on, but I'm just guessing about the day. At 5:45 in the morning I don't really know very much, really, just what's needed to keep my car in the right lane and out of the faster idiots' way.

I guess Led Zeppelin at 120 decibels is a bit much for a quiet parking lot *("Hey, Hey Momma! Say the way you move...")*. I see the guard peering out the door, wondering what he should do. I keep the volume high coming in to work, just to keep the blood flowing. Only I forget when I stop and always manage to wake everyone up.

Wrestle with the damn electronic badge, wait for an elevator that's never on the right floor, then get hit with the funky decor right off the bat. Sheesh. Neon? At 5:50am?? I wanna know who did this paint job and get **their** butt up here before sunrise. Would go a long way toward the Use Of Beige As A Primary Color.

Wandering back from making coffee -- one of the few worthwhile morning activities -- I notice that the Teledisplay says it's 6:00am. My watch says it's 5:58am. My Mac, once I get there, is showing 9:37pm. Deciding that Mickey wouldn't let me down, I settle down for two minutes of MS-Mail reading. Hmmm. Shift, click, drag, delete. Well, that's done. And 90 seconds to go!

The Aspect has no sense of humor, though. **"Ring!"** Oh, hell. And the coffee is back the other way....

"Good Morning, Apple Technical Support." This is my best line, I think.

"HI. THIS IS GEORGE FROM CONNECTING POINT."

"Hi, George. What city are you calling from?"

"ALABAMA."

"What city???"

"OH. BIRMINGHAM."

"Thanks, George. Are you on a speakerphone or something?"

"NO, I'M JUST TALKING LOUD 'CAUSE YOU GUYS ARE WAY OVER THERE IN CALIFORNIA. CAN YA'LL HEAR ME OKAY?"

"Just fine, George. We can **all** hear you just fine. You can talk a little lower, if you like."

George chilled out somewhat. "Good. Got a question for ya. What is the horizontal scan rate for Macintosh High-Resolution RGB Monitor?"

I just stared at the phone. Of all the.... "Hang on for a second, George. I have to look that one up." I put him on hold, told AppleLink to find the information and jogged off after that cup of coffee.

* * * * *

Off Time. Sometimes referred to as Quiet-Time, which I don't understand at all. It should be called Catch-Up-Like-Hell-Time, or Let's-Play-Lots-Of-Pinball-Time. I took a look at MS-Mail (shift, click, drag, delete), scribbled in the Franklin Day Planner to keep up appearances, and ran for the elevator.

Several minutes later I was still waiting for the elevator, along with some other potential elevator victims. Doug came up from the stairs and told us he last spotted the elevator mucking about on the roof, near the west end of the building. Actually, this didn't surprise me. When you have to wait a full five minutes for one elevator out of three at 6:00am you just **know** these things can be true. I took the stairs down, got lost in the construction, and finally set off an alarm just getting out of the building. Guards came running, pointing their walkie-talkies menacingly at me. I think they set things up that way, just to have something exciting to do.

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Halfway through watching the INIT icons appear on my screen the Telephone From Hell rang. I had forgotten to put it into idle while performing this necessary system maintenance. Considering whether to let the call bounce back into the queue, I decided to answer it instead. I ***knew*** this was a mistake.

"Good Afternoon, Apple Assistance Center."

A screech greeted me. "My name is Gladys and I'm pissed. I just spent $75 on my computer. What are you going to do about it?!"

Um. How to go about this? I needed to know just a bit more, like what this lady's last name was among other things. Not knowing where to begin, I asked, "What are you talking about, Gladys?"

Mistake Number 2, I ***knew*** again.

Screeching, "You people never listen! I **said** I spent $75 on this piece of junk and I think you should do something about it!"

Did we advance past square one? I didn't think so.

Attempting to put soothing electrons through the phone line, I said, "Okay. Let's back up a bit. What kind of computer do you have?"

"I don't know! What makes you think I know that?! I'm not some kind of techno-wizard type! I just use it, I just spent $75 on it, and I think you ought to pay for it!"

Made some progress. I now know that dear Gladys wants us to cover some type of bill, and that she desperately needs to have the computer taken away from her before someone does something awful to her with it. Like me.

"Well, does the computer have the screen built into it, or...." I never finished this brilliant (I thought) question.

"Who is your manager?! You're not helping me at all, you #*&%$%! I want to speak to your manager!"

"Um. Gladys. If you continue to talk like that I'll to have to...."

"*$&@% off!"

"Fine, Gladys. Hope you make it a little farther up the food chain one day soon. Goodbye."

* * * * *

2:45pm, meeting time. Exhausting the possibilities of straight-line doodles with a ruler and my Planner, I look around the room.

Recognizing some of the people I normally work with, I was reassured that I was still in the right place. Ever fall asleep in school? The teacher doesn't wake you up at the end of class, and makes sure the next class is real quiet. Then, suspecting something amiss, your brain kicks you into awareness and makes you look around. Confusion, and a strange sinking feeling, steal through your body as you fail to recognize anyone.

This did not happen, fortunately.

What did happen was a feeling of complete bafflement. What, exactly, was this meeting about? I spotted a handout filled with charts I recognized as coming from Excel, but an almost-black pie chart doesn't convey much information (other than there is a lot of something, relative to some other things, which was probably obvious to everyone concerned anyway).

After almost five minutes of paying close attention to the monologue, I realized I still didn't know what the topic was. Before I was able to figure it all out the meeting broke up. This, I felt, was probably for the better.

I let Empower lock away the deep, dark secrets of my hard drives and put the Mac to sleep. Another day, another small monetary gain.

SSDD.

Now, 🦀's BITS about WORDS:

When you are looking for names or words to use in your scenario/game/campaign to make a character/town/language sound exotic or different, where do you get your words? Do you make them up, steal them from authors who made them up, get them from a different language?

Here's another alternative: get them from the English language. The following lists of words come from a book by Susan Kelz Sperling ©1977 entitled Poplollies and Bellibones, A Celebration of Lost Words, Clarkson N. Potter, Inc. (New York) Publishers. This book doesn't only list the "lost words", it also discusses them and uses them in stories and anecdotes. However, for the present, I think I will simply draw from the glossary.

I think I'll start with *name calling*.

Genderless names (please note, not all of the following names are derogatory - just most of them):

AFTERLING: An inferior.
BEDSWERVER, SPOUSEBREAK: A person unfaithful to the marriage bed.
BLOBTALE, ONGTONGUE: A tattle-tale or gossip.
BREEDBATE: A person or something that creates strife, a mischief maker.
CHITTY-FACE: A person with a thin, pinched face; a term of contempt.
CLOYER: A pickpocket's accomplice, or the one who intrudes into a bunch of thieves to claim a share.
FLIPEROUS: A proud gossip, a prattler.
GIVELER: A hoarder, a greedy person. One who "heaps up".
GUNDYGUT, GREEDYGUT, TENTERBELLY: A glutton.
HEANLING: A low, base person.
HOODPICK: A miser or skinflint.
HUFTY-TUFTY, HUFF-MUFF, HUFF-SNUFF, HUFF-NOSE: A braggart or conceited boor.
LICKSPIGOT, LICKSPITTLE, LICKDISH: One who fawns or behaves in an extremely servile manner. A revolting parasite who hangs on, even to lick the last drop from a spigot.
MAGSMAN: A swindler.
MUMPER: A begger, one who sponges off others.
NICKPOT: A fraudulent innkeeper.
NOSE OF WAX: A fickle personality; or, applied to one's flexibility of faith as a means of protecting oneself.
PORKNELL: One as fat as a pig.
PRICKMEDAINTY: A dandy (of either sex).
SQUINT-A-PIPES: A squinting person.
STRAIGHT-FINGERED: Thoroughly honest, having fingers that won't bend to hold dishonest gains.
THEOW: A servant, a slave.
WIND-SUCKER, YISSER: An envious, covetous person.
WHIFLING: An extremely insignificant person or creature.
WHITELIVER: A coward.

Terms for Fools:

FEATHER-HEAD: A silly, lightheaded person.
FIZGIG: A frivolous person, especially a woman. Also, fireworks in the form of a serpent.
FONKIN: A little fool.
FOPDOODLE: A simpleton.
HODDYPEAK: A simpleton, blockhead.
LIRIPOOP: Among other definitions, a silly person.
MOBARD: Clown, boor. A term of contempt.
POOP-NODDY: A fool or simpleton; also, the game of love.

Terms for Women:

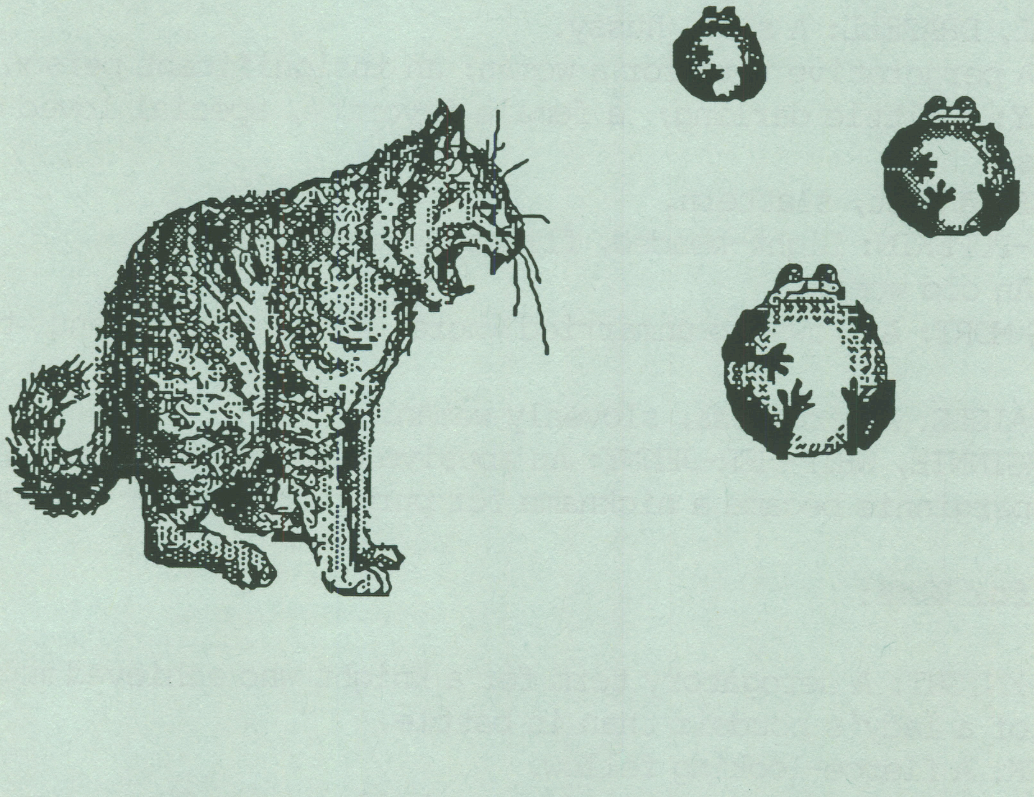
BAWDSTROT, BRONSTROPS: A prostitute.
BELLIBONE: A lovely maiden, a pretty lass.
DAGGLE-TAIL: A woman whose garments are dirtied by being trailed over wet ground, by extension an untidy woman, a slut or slattern.
DRASSOCK: A drab, untidy woman.
DROSSELL, DRAZELL: A slut, hussy.
FLEAK: A perjorative term for a woman; an insignificant person.
POPLOLLY: A little darling; a female favorite, special loved one, or mistress.
TAW-BESS: A slut, slattern.
TIRLIRY-PUFFKIN: Light-headed, flighty woman, a flirt.
VECKE: An old woman.
WALKING MORT: A grown-up unmarried whore, who often pretends to be a widow.
WALLYDRAIGLE: A worthless, slovenly woman.
WHIPPERGINNIE, WHIP-HER-JENNY: An abusive term for a woman. The land of whipperginnie became a nickname for purgatory, and a card game.

Terms for Men:

CARPET-KNIGHT: A derogatory term for a knight who achieved more on the carpet of a lady's boudoir than in battle.
KILLBUCK: A fierce-looking fellow.
KILLCOW: A braggart, swashbuckler, or bully; a murderous man, a butcher.
RUTTERKIN: A swaggering gallant or bully.

SMELLSMOCK: A licentious man, specifically, a derogatory term for a lewd or lecherous priest.
SPIT-FROG: A small sword, a term of contempt.
WAGHALTER: A rogue likely to swing in a gallows.

If there is interest, I can continue presenting these "lost words" until either everyone gets bored, or I run out. Let me know if you want to see more.



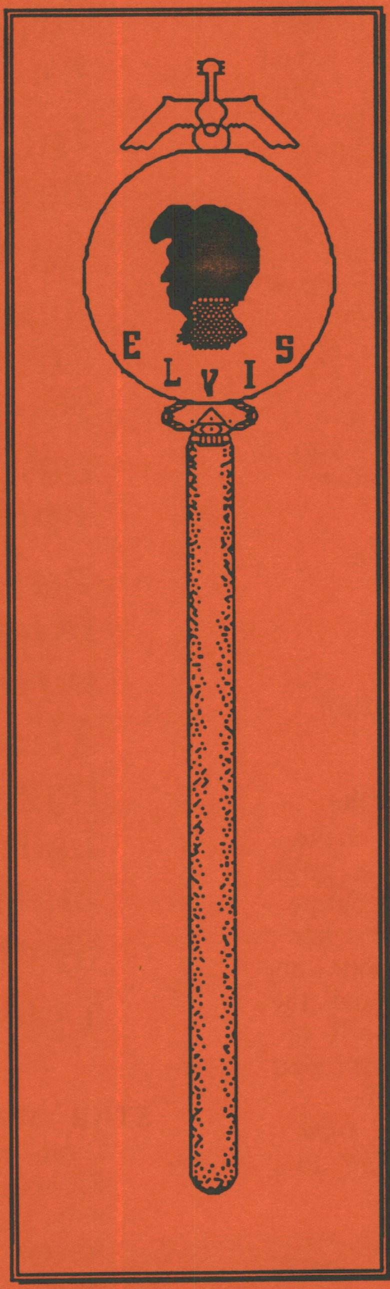
THE IMPERIAL ELVIS POST

☥ ISSUE THREE ☥

Pronoun Trouble

I'm taking a graduate grammar course and we have been covering some of the basic problems of the English language. One of these is the growing concern for a singular pronoun to take the place of he or she, because both are sex specific. Personally, I have been using "he/she," but that is clumsy. I think that artificial constraints or band-aids such as "per," "s/he," or "thon" miss the point. So, I have decided to use an ancient pronoun that has been in use (although many say that it is incorrect) since the time of Shakespeare: "their." After all, when you say: "A character...he," you are actually referring to more than one character.

If you are falling, dive.
Joseph Campbell
(a Buddhist aphorism)



The Games I Run

I hope this will act as a teaser column. If you see something you want to have me elaborate upon in MOTiVE, let me know.

EDGE - This is my first love, my child. (Ooo aren't I incestuous!) At the risk of sounding like a complete gamer geek, Edge is more than a game for me. With Edge I am working out my own extended allegories-- it my feeble attempt to work out my own mythology. It has and will take up the bulk of my time. Presently, I am running two groups of adventurers:

The Peer Group - This group is made up of the first players to actually complete a grand adventure on Edge- namely preventing another all-out war on Edge. They are all extremely powerful. For their deeds they have been made peers of the Autocrat, giving them more power and influence than many of the smaller clanheads of the Autocracy.

The Khaimar Campaign - This is made up of players from the original group, but in this game all of the characters are connected to the Ardent Loper Clan in Khaimar. The emphasis is upon clan and race relations.

CHAMPIONS - I've been playing CHAMPIONS for about seven or eight years now and though I can appreciate how new players find the rules (esp. character creation) daunting, I have been doing it so long it has ceased to be a problem for me.

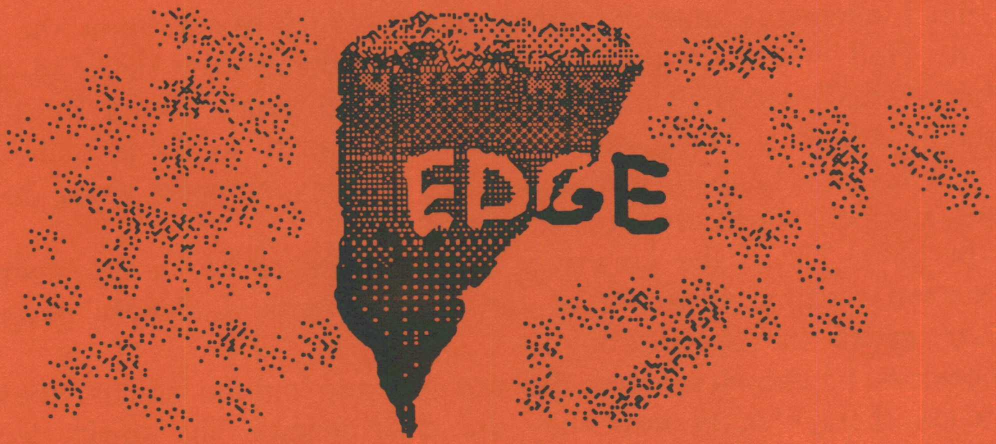
NORSKAMERIKA - This is the only CHAMPIONS game which I run by myself. I started it in 1989. It is a world like our own, which is now rapidly changing. On Jan. 1, 1989, 12:00:00:01 A.M. the world became magical again. There are no caped heroes, no super technology. The binding mythology is mostly Norse, but this is only a guiding principle.

The Minutemen - The Minutemen campaign is the newest face upon a game started by Paul, Keith, Deena and I during our days of dorm life at UNCA. Although I rarely run games in this world now, I have and still do take part in the making of its history--now mostly in the role of:

U.N.I.S.O. - U.N.I.S.O. is run by Paul Patino and myself as an experiment in the "Grand Campaign." We have taken the Minuteman gameworld and have set forces in motion that just might tear it apart. It is our Dark Future CHAMPIONS game. We have taken the kid gloves off for this one--one character has died already and the heroes have been forced to kill to survive. The players are employed by the UN as super-powered special agents, and are only now (in the sixth game) beginning to see the conspiracy at work...

SPACEGOTHIC - This is my Role-Playing Mental Masturbation game. It is as weird as I can make it, and it is always as fast-paced as I can run it. This game as everything: life rafts made from blow-up love dolls and inflatable sheep; backstabbing PCs; demons with chain guns; electric nuns; accidental, orbital re-entry; demonic costume parties; poor troll family relations; maggots bigger than buses; whimsy cards out the butt; Metal Hurlant; possessed body parts; zombie waiters; morose droids; and annoying typefaces.

STAR WARS - The Star Wars adventures I run at cons can be nearly as weird as SpaceGothic, but strangely enough, I only seem to run the game at cons. Go figure. My central philosophy is to spend 90% of my time making up the characters and then put the characters in a situation that they aren't prepared for. I would say more, but you are going to end up seeing just what I have in mind.



EDGE Update: I have recently been looking over the new Fantasy Hero rules. And upon suggestions from Keith and Paul (and with a great deal of help from them) have begun experimenting with converting EDGE to FH.

MAGIC UPON EDGE

Magic is a force which comes from the interaction between the Spirit Plane and Reality. There are many kinds of energy on the plane and many different ways to harness it.

These forces can be manipulated in three ways by characters:

Divine Magic - Divine magic is an invocation of a god's power. Divine magic is Lawful. This is reflected in its power and the certainty of its casting. Life force (experience) must be permanently sacrificed to a god to gain it.

Spirit Magic - Spirit Magic is an invocation to the denizens of the Spirit Plane to do feats of magic for the summoner. The spirits draw some energy (END) from the caster as payment. Spirit Magic is Neutral.

Sorcery - Sorcery is a form of magic in which the caster actually controls the energy and shapes it to his own will. Sorcery is Chaotic and therefore: unstable, unsure and dangerous.

The Magic Myth

The first form of magic was divine magic. The gods taught the people to speak a special language so that they could communicate with their worshippers directly. This was called the Spirit Tongue. But this also allowed man to speak with their dead ancestors and the other spirits which lived upon the spirit plane.

Just as the God would do great miracles in exchange for sacrifice, the Spirits, in return for a small sacrifices of energy would do small favors for the people.

Soon, people found it much easier to ask the spirits to do just about everything for them. The people became lazy. They stopped going to the temples, and stopped sacrificing to the Gods.

So Atavin gave Tirian the Unwriting Pen. Whatever he wrote, people forgot. So Tirian started writing down all of the Spirit Words. Suddenly people began to forget how to speak the Spirit Tongue.

The ancestors of the Sorcerers, did not give up on the spirits. they asked the Spirits to teach them exactly how they did their magic. The spirits told them of another language, the True Tongue. Although they did not have long before the The Unwriting Pen wrote their conversation away, they learned enough to actually cast magic. Wisely, Ankhelon stepped in and convinced Tirian to put the pen down, saving enough of the Spirit Tongue to allow some spells to be cast, and prayers to be made.

EDGEDEX: E - G

{All internal art by Jim Crabtree.}

EDGE- the term used by Markain Tuvenall, the first autocrat, to describe the landmass held aloft into the faerielands by Atavin, father of the gods. The name "Edge" refers to both the precarious position of the beings on Edge and may as well refer to Atavin's use of the landmass itself like a sword's edge to hurt the Faerie God.

Our world, our life, is on Edge.
Once Paradise, now thrust up into grey veiled sky of hell.
No more do we see the stars of Ankhelon's crown, nor the
light of his spear passing over our orchards.

Our world, our life, is on Edge.
The blood from our feet runs down the blade
into the wound of paradise.

Here we stand, on our broken feet,
balanced between the faerie lands and the
dark, deaths-grip of our blind father.
Our world, our life, is on Edge.

(Markain Tuvenall's death poem.)

ELAN - Elan is the Spring Godstar. She is the fertility deity. Her shrines dot the farmlands of the city-states and the temples of Sharin. It is her light which breaks Winter's hold on the land. Her presence in the sky causes the plants to crack their seed-shells and grow. She shines with a gentile green glow, which steadily grows more intense with the approach of her lover, the Summer Godstar, and the holiday of Vislan.

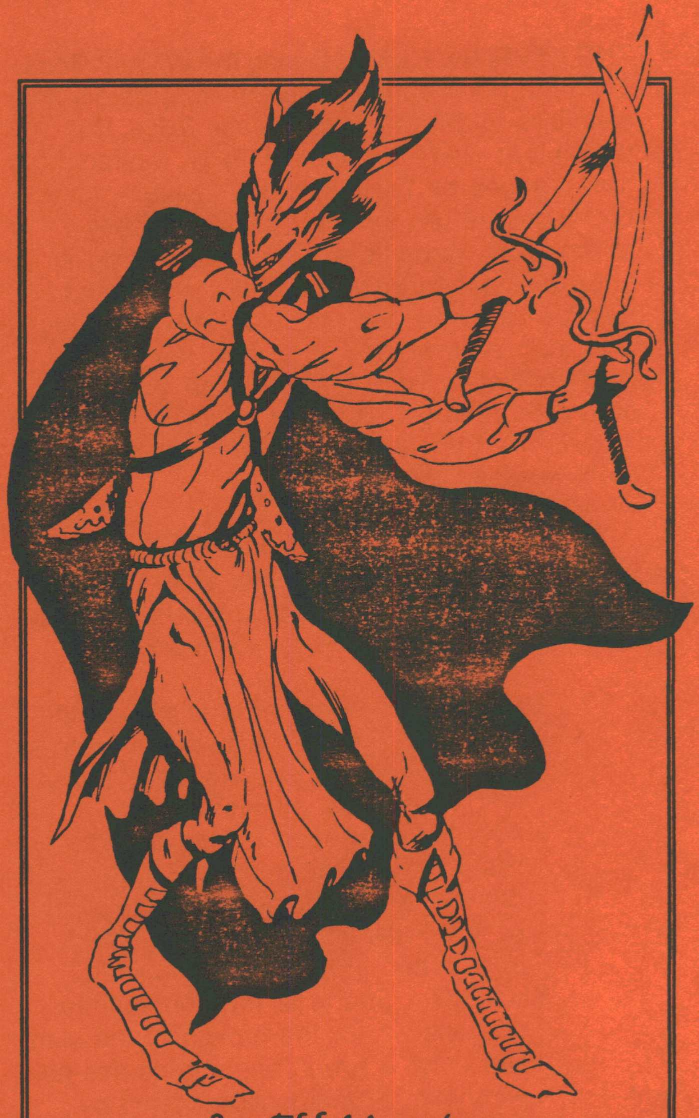
ELANDA - Elanda is the celebration of Elan's Escape from Winter's fortress and the subsequent beginning of spring. Children conceived on this day will grow to be strong in body and heart.

THE ELDER ELEMENTS - The Elder Elements are abstractions of the contradictory forces of the universe. The Elder Elements are listed as opposites, each group being referred to as a dimension. They are: Law and Chaos; Evil and Good; and the contrary unto itself, Time.

THE ELEMENTS - The Elements are the building blocks of the material world. Like the Elder Elements they are listed in grouped contraries: Darkness and Light; Earth and Air; Fire and Water.

THE ELEMENTAL REPUBLIC - This term is used to describe the society which existed during the Without Gods Time. It lasted for possibly thousands of years and was brought down by the rise of the forces of Marlod. This was a time of untold cultural diversity between the city-states. Many forms of governments existed, but a universal religion based upon the worship of the Elements and Elder Elements was widespread Many temple ruins exist to this day, the most widespread being Heavensfall, which scholars believe to have been the holy city for his religion.

ELVES - Elves have proven to be the greatest enemy of man. They are worshippers of Chaos, Air and Water. To humans they seem implacable and unmerciful. Elves speak a magic language, and build cities and ships which float on air.



An Elf Warrior

ENKIDHU (Faad Enkidhu) - Faad Enkidhu was the former Autocrat. He ruled Edge for over ninety years--dying at the age of 120 in the year 321 A.R.

ENTERTAINERS - Entertainers are the minstrels and troubadours of Edge. Many are Journeymen/Priests of Shalmain, and therefore users of powerful magics. For this reason Entertainers are both welcomed as performers, but shunned by society as a whole.

EARTH - The Element Earth represents the deep stone and minerals that are the center of the world, the bones of Aleia and Atavin. It is the most Lawful of the Elements.

THE ETERNAL CLAN - During the Without Gods Time the good deities tried age-long rituals and sacrifices to get Atavin to release Edge. But their pleas were fruitless. Finally, woken from their trances by the music of Shalmain, they decided to return to their followers. They returned as Marlod's armies were closing in upon the last fortress cities (Tarentel- and Kirath-Mor). After the war was won the gods saw that their worshippers' (the few that lived) societies were in ruins. The gods re-organized themselves into a family unit and this model, The Eternal Clan, became the model for their worshippers as well.

ANKHELON - Ankhelon is the clanhead and as such, the ruler of all the other Gods. His color is gold and his weapon is the spear. He is worshiped by leaders and the wise.

DIN - Din is the chief councilor of the clanhead and the warlord. His color is red and his weapons are many. Din is worshipped by all warriors

KAK- Kak represents the clan warrior. His color is white and his weapons are the clan weapons. Kak is worshipped by the Paladins which protect the priests and grounds of the church.

SHARIN - Sharin is the clanmother, responsible for the growth of the clan. Her color is green and she carries no weapons. Sharin is worshipped by healers and mothers. Her temples also contain the shrines to the Godstars, so she is worshiped by farmers as well.

TIRIAN - Tirian is the chamberlain, the keeper of knowledge. His color is black and he carries no weapons. Few but the secretive archivists of Tirian worship this god of mystery.

F

FAERIE - The term faerie refers to any of the races created out of light, air and water by the faerie God. The most common are: Elves, Hesid, and Goblins.

FANGTUNG - Fangtung is an maleficent spirit/beast which haunts the crags of Mt. Vudormath. It is described as having twelve tongues lined with a shark's teeth, and a bloated frog-like body.

FESTIVAL OF SOUND - On the first day of the year the clans celebrate the formation of the clans. For twenty-four hours all the clans ring their clan bell and perform rituals to honor their dead.

FEY - The Fey are a sub-race of Man. They are the descendents of the humans which bread with the Elves, when the Elves occupied Wol. Fey are innately magical and chaotic, and gravitate to magic-using professions. They have jet black hair, dark or blue eyes and pale skin. Fey women are known for their great beauty.

FORHAST THE GODBITER- Forhast was Marlod's troll champion. He was 30+ feet tall, and was covered in green and red scales-each of which was enchanted to resist damage. He was finally defeated in single combat by Din after the troll nearly killed Kak. His headstone and heartstone had to be separated by many kilometers to keep him from regenerating. Din asked Shalmain to hide the stones where no God could find them.

FIGHTING SCHOOLS- Many forms of fighting exist in the Autocracy, as many warriors seek to discover their own art. The three largest schools are run by powerful clans. Thousands apply for membership in the schools, but only the best are taken. Each of the schools has armies of warriors pledged to fight for them as mercenaries.

MANTIS - The Mantis school was stated after the Dungeon wars exposed men to the fighting styles of the Thridd. The mantis train solely in fencing and martial arts. They prize precision and control.

MONKEY - The Monkey school is the oldest fighting school. It stresses movement, awareness and agility.

TIGER - The tiger school is the second oldest school. It favors brute force and frenzied drive.

FIRST MOUNTIAN - The First Mountain is the home of Durathon and Mishgona, The Gnome Gods. The Dwarves left Edge soon after The Shattering, via the Gate of Unknowing to return to the First Mountain. To the Dwarves and to the Gnomes and Spriggan, it is heaven.

FREE GODS - The Free Gods are worshipped outside any pantheon:

THE FAERIE GOD - This deity was born at the same time as Atavin and Aleia, The Old Gods. It is is the ruler of Chaos, Air and Water. Its body is the Sea of Mist into which Edge is held by Atavin. The god or goddess itself is a mystery and seems inimical to all things on Edge.

FEONN - Feonn is the goddess of the Anima, the bestial side of man. She can mate with any male being and produce offspring.

MIST - Mist is the female dragon which lives on the Isle of Winter, it is said that she is worshipped there by beings which dwell under her protection.

SHALMAIN - Shalmain is the jack-of-all-trades god of Chaos. He has as many manifestations as he wishes (or can gain him worshippers). He is chiefly worshipped though the Troubadours, the entertainer / rogue / entrepreneurs of Edge. Merchants, thieves, travelers, storytellers, painters, servants and slaves worship him as well. He is the Eternal Trickster and Artist.

FREEMAN - Freeman is a nice way of saying unclanned. Freeman have only their friends and immediate family to support them, and as such suffer many forms of discrimination an oppression on Edge.

G

GATE OF UNKNOWING - The Gate of unknowing is an opening to the underside of Edge. The Dwarves of old dug this passage to escape Edge and return to the First Mountain when Atavin tore Paradise, and the Dwarves living upon it, from Aleia and held it into the Faerielands. Evidently, this separation was too much for the Dwarves to take and they chose the uncertainty of the Unknowing to life disconnected from the Veins of the First Mountain.

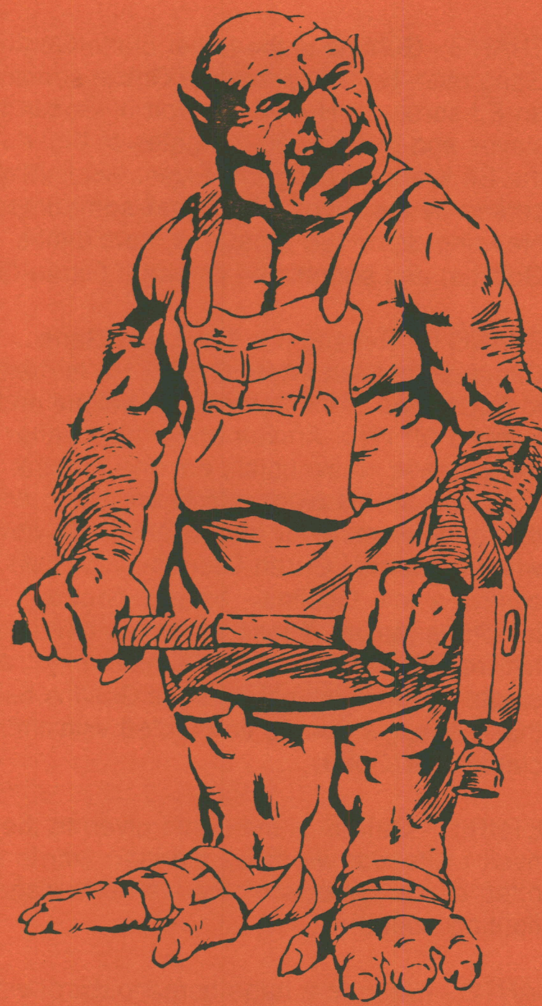
GEHANG - Gehang is the father of the Guran-Gang race. He was a favored Goblin servant of an Elf sorcerer. He led a revolt of Goblin slaves and threw open the gates of Wol during the Elf War, dooming the Elves. His line was cursed by the Elves with Chaos-sometimes breeding deformed creatures; sometimes Goblins; and sometimes powerful Guran-Gang

GEHANG II - Gehang II is the Guran-Gang Clanhead of Clan White Goblin. He is married to Egyra, one of the heroes who helped end the Second Elf War. Armies under his banner helped save Heavensfall, earning him the right to from his clan. He is an albino with tremendous magical and charismatic power-- whereas normal Guran-Gang may be able to control a few Goblins-- he can control hundreds, easily. These attributes have helped him rebuild Histmael as a "Goblin city," and create a Goblin language. Most Goblins believe that Gehang's spirt is connected with their clanhead's Spirit.

GETHRIN - Gethrin is the name given to the neck protection worn by clanned warriors. It often bears symbols of the warrior's clan and fighting school.

GIANTS - Giants are huge humanoids, of varying types and forms which live in the barrier mountains. Although not necessarily evil, they often have a taste for the flesh for sentient beings. The people of Palmon have a tale of a man who was gradually tuned into a giant by a sword of the Hero Wars, the sword was uncreatively named Giantmaker. Giantmaker is said to be resting with the bones of its last "victim."

GITH - Gith are the sub-species of loper bred for war. They are larger, stronger and more intelligent that lopers, but can be extremely dangerous to the rider and others if not handled well. Gith are close to twenty feet long and twelve feet tall, and look like small tryannosaurs.



A Gnome Crafter

GNOMES - This sub-race of Kobolds is probably the most powerful of the three (Brownies, Spriggans, and Gnomes) Gnomes are actually of Spriggan stock which found the old Dwarven city of Taranell. The Spriggan, exposed to the Dwarven mines and technology have dramatically changed. They now consider themselves to be one step away from becoming true Dwarves. They consider themselves to be the inheritors of all things Dwarven, and protect their property fanatically. Most Gnomes are subjects of the Gnome King (a.k.a.,The Under King). The Gnomes have a feudal system of government based upon those Spriggan families which first began transforming.

GNOME GODS - The Gnomes and Spriggans worship the God Durathon and his wife, Mishgona. Almost all Gnomes and Spriggans worship Durathon and Mishgona (to a lesser degree). Brownies worship Mishgona, of course. Other strange cults exist which worship The First Mountain, Kol and Meklyn. These are the most common deities:

DURATHON - Durathon is usually represented as a black skinned, golden eyed Dwarf (Gnome). His color is black and his weapons are the gunne and the warhammer. He is dour, serious and industrious.

MISHGONA - Mishgona is the goddess of the things which grow in the earth: fungus, crystals, stalagmites, and mould. She is the mother of the Brownies

MEKLYN - Meklyn was a servant of Durathon, who was consumed by his love for machinery and his hatred for Mishgona's creation of the Brownies. He tried to kill her, and for this was killed by Durathon. His machines built a replica, even more perverted than the original, and his cult was born. Meklyn cults exist in the lands of the Gnome King, bred from the machinery left behind by the Dwarves.

GNOME GUNNE- The Gnome gunne is a roughly 1.5m musket. Their manufacture is forbidden to anyone in the Autocracy. Only the Gnomes may build them or make the magical powders which charge them.

GOBLINS - Goblins are a slave race bred by Elves, from an unknown stock. During the last battle of the Triumvirate, the Goblins, under the leadership of Gehang, opened the gated of the Elven city and sealed the Elves' doom. Goblins stand four to six feet tall, and an rough red to green skin. Their head is usually brown,and hairless, with slanted eyes, pointed ears, and v-shaped mouth. Goblins have nasty temper and unclean physical habits. they have tremendous stamina , but little personal motivation. Goblins are immune to to ingested poisons which is fortunate, since they eat literally anything they can overpower and swallow. They can also live of of anything organic: wooden bowls, grass or each other.

GODS OF WOL- The Gods of Wol are a loose pantheon of deities ruled by the Lord of Evil, Marlod. Worship is mandatory among the city's residents. Worship of any of these gods is forbidden in the Autocracy, although secret sects and cults exist amongst the lowlife and villainy.

MARLOD - It was Marlod that caused the Bell of Worlds to blind Atavin. It was Marlod that attempted to ruin the lands, precipitating the God's War. Marlod is the lord of chains and hooks. He is wrapped in a chain forged from the souls of his worshippers and victims. This is their hell. He also has the souls of all the other Gods of Wol on his chain as well--this is how he keeps them in line.

SHEREED - Shereed is the mistress of poisoners and assassins. She is worshipped by assassins, and by those wishing vengeance. She poisoned her own unborn son, child of Marlod's rape.

UGGRETH - Uggreth is Marlod and Shereed's son. He died in her womb and was born undead. He is the lord of unlife. His undead worshippers form the bulk of Marlod's armies.

ARVININ - Arvinin is Shalmain and Feonn's son, he is a thief and a psychopathic killer. He calls himself the Wandering Death. He has no cult. He is used by Marlod to create fear and for spying upon the other gods.

AWRYNN - Awrynn is a Great Beast, enslaved by Marlod as his riding beast and guardian. Awrynn looks like a great indigo wolf with flaming green eyes, covering all of its body, except its head. Awrynn is large enough to carry a hundred warriors.

GASHAK - Gashak is another Great Beast. He is kept by Marlod to keep Uggreth in line. Gashak is the Worm of the Dead. He eats all dead things, and finds the presence of unlife abominable, but quite appetizing.

PROVARRE - Provarre is the lord of violence. He is said to have ravaged a village called Ogra, known for it's cannibalistic ways--creating the Ogres, the race of men which feeds upon the brains of intelligent creatures to gain their powers. His cult is strong in Wol and in the secret Ogre villages and hideouts throughout the Autocracy.

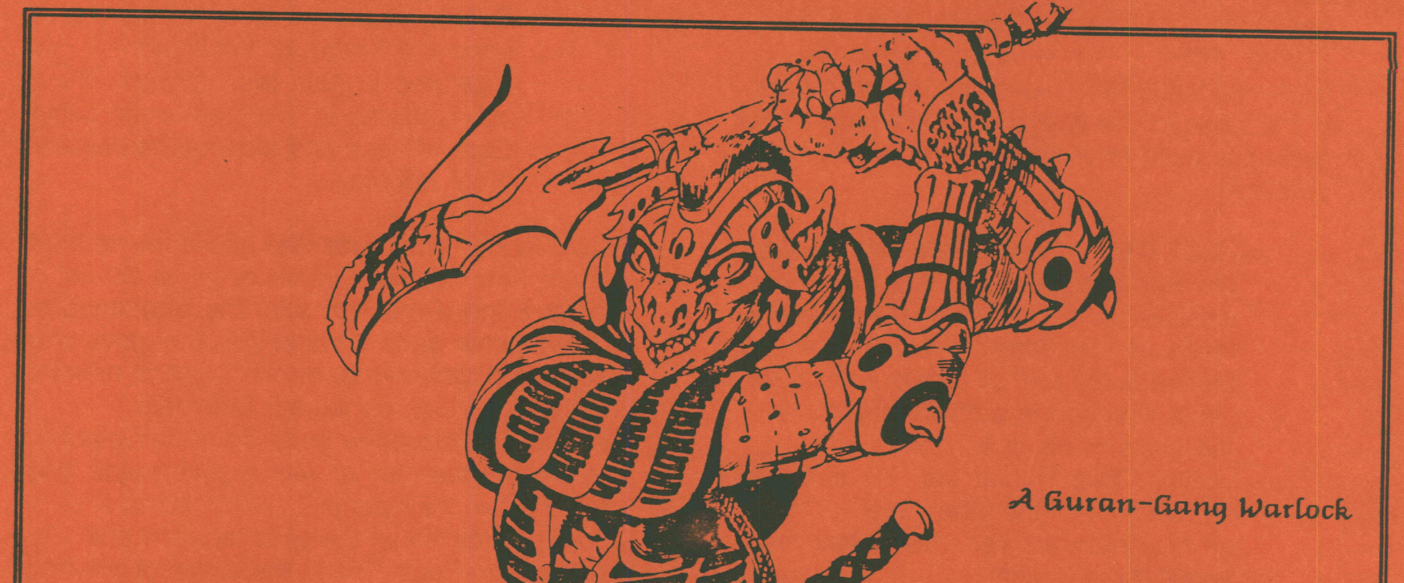
GODS' WAR - The Gods' War ended the Without Gods Time. Marlod and his evil host did not leave Edge (Paradise) after the Shattering as did the other gods. He and the other gods of evil set about destroying, perverting and maiming the races which remained. Shalmain summoned the other gods from their attempt to placate their father with a song made from the cries of their people. When he awoke, Ankhelon called all the gods together and returned to Edge. There, the forces of good and evil struggled for many years, until Ankhelon threw down Marlod, permanently binding him in his chains of evil. Ankhelon ended the war by banishing all the gods from Edge with the sacrifice of Kheon.

GODSTARS - the godstars were the first race created by the gods. They were cursed by Atavin and now are seen as bright stars which mark the seasons; each is a different color. they are: Elan (Spring), Visruul (Summer), Aura (Fall), and Pherax (Winter). Some children born under their dawning light are marked by the godstars, and gain special abilities, Farmers practice ancient rites during the waxing and waning.

GORHOUND - Gorhounds are huge, two or three-headed wolves which appear on battlefields to feast on the dead and dying. They do not like being disturbed during their meals.

GUILD OF TRUE MAGES - The Guild is really a framework for the education of sorcerers. Petitioners (usually children) show up, go to work as a servants for the guildhall, and are periodically tested and educated. If the petitioners pass the tests and can stand the years it may take to become an apprentice, they are admitted into the guilds. Guildhalls are found in all of the city-states. The Guild is controlled by Kelestia, the Nomen of True Mages, and the local Masters of the school.

GUILDS - There is no formal guild structure in the Autocracy. Most clans fulfil the function of guilds. the training of freemen is usually done by attaching oneself to a practitioner of a particular craft.



A Guran-Gang Warlock

GURAN-GANG - The Guran-Gang are the decedents of the patriarch of the Goblins--Gehang. His line was cursed with CHAOS by Elf Sorcerers after Gehang opened the gates of Wol to the armies of the Triumvirate. Most of his line are born misshapen and often die at birth. Others may have great powers and the strongest have the power to command Goblins. Guran-Gang generally look like Goblins, but may vary greatly in their appearance. Most are mercenaries, or warlocks. Along with the Fey, they are one of the most innately magical races.

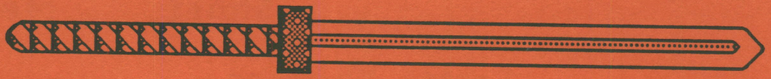
SPACE GOTHIC

WEAPON CHART

WEAPON		DAMAGE CODE	FF	MF	RANGE IN METERS Short	Medium	Long
					Energy Weapons		
Hold-Out Blaster		3D+1	1	5	3-4	5-8	9-12
Sporting Blaster		3D+1	1	5	3-10	11-30	31-150
Blaster Pistol		4D	1	5	3-10	11-30	31-120
Hunting Blaster		4D	1	5	3-30	31-100	101-300
Heavy Blast Pistol		5D	1	5	3-7	8-25	26-50
Blaster Rifle		5D	1	5	3-30	31-100	101-300
Blaster Carbine		5D	1	5	3-25	26-60	61-250
Ogre Blaster Rifle		6D	1	5	3-50	51-120	121-350
					Projectile Weapons		
Orc Thump Gun		5D	2	6	3-30	31-100	101-300
Combat Rifle		3D+2	2	5	3-30	31-100	101-250
Automatic Pistol		3D	1	5	3-10	11-25	25-50
Rifle		3D+1	1	5	3-30	31-100	101-300
Submachinegun		4D+1	2	5	3-10	11-50	51-100
Black Powder Pistol		2D+2	1	1	3-4	5-8	9-12
Musket		3D	1	1	3-10	11-30	31-100
Crossbow		2D+2	1	1	3-10	11-30	31-50
Longbow		2D+2	1	2	3-10	11-30	31-100
Hand Grenade	range		1	1	3-7	8-20	21-40
	diff. #				3-4	5-6	7-10
	damage	5D			4D	3D	2D
Thermal Detonator	range		1	1	3-4	5-7	8-12
	diff. #				3-8	9-12	13-20
	damage	5D			8D	5D	2D

Melee Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Difficulty Scale
Hands	STR	3-5
Club	STR+1D	3-5
Knife	STR+1D	3-5
Sword	STR+1D+2	3-5
Spear	STR+1D+2	6-10
Poleaxe	STR+2D	6-10
Ogre Warsword	STR+2D+1	6-10
"Vibro"_______	+1D	11-15
Lightsabre	5D	16-20



Night of the Living Deadwear

Dead Man's Hand: Adds 1D to STR damage in that arm only. 2000Cr. 1 insanity point. This prosthetic can either be made of the wearer's real arm or another can be sewn on with bailing wire or twine.

Dead Eye: Gives the Wearer the ability to distinguish undead in their normal range of vision. 500Cr. 0.5 insanity point. This prosthetic can either be made of the wearer's real eye or another can be sewn in.

Revenent Corps Glyph: (Legion of the Damned Reserve Brand): The person wearing a revenent's glyph will rise from the dead immediately after being killed . The new Undead has twenty-four hours to kill his slayer, if appropriate. Thereafter, the new zombie belongs to the Golgothans. The zombie will shut down after his twenty-four hours, until a Golgothan priest comes to pick it up. 5000Cr. 1 insanity point.

Corazon Glutenaeus: One of the first Tech/Magic interfaces, this handy addition equips the PC with vampire-like incisors and an artificial digestive tract allowing them to drink blood. They may also inflict a STR +2 attack with their new teeth. 2000Cr. 2 insanity points.

Rictus Mask: By severing all the nerves to the muscles to your face and attacking them to a handy control box the PC can duplicate nearly any face of the PC's species. +2D to all PER skills except Hide/Sneak and Search. 1 insanity point. 1500Cr.

Mailing Comments

The Covers: I know it is not "Kosher" to speak as OE in my own 'zine, but I really appreciate the work of the artists (Scott McMillan, Jason Edwards, Jim Crabtree, Clyde Bailey, and Jon Monk) which have donated their work to our APA. If any of you would like to submit some work, either your own or friends, I would greatly appreciate it. Thanks.

Hemispheres: Wow, A.J., the layout is greatly improved in this 'zine. Marshalling the fores of the Big Blue Tower (the Dark Tower to all of us MAC-Philes) paid off. As to your content, bravo as well. I have not been running extended campaigns for as long as you have, and I hope to take your advice and the experiences I have had in you game to heart. I hope you can learn something from me as well. Jess--look at Gil's "Foot."

Tales of the Brass Monkey: Τωο χαν πλψ ατ τηισ γαμε!

Tail of the Monkey Man: Jon, can Jon download your Sersus stuff to an ASCII file for me and my MAC? Keep it coming. (I will resist temptation to re-spell that last word.) I'll run Star Wars this Christmas.

The Blue View: Sumerian Magnetic Pole Wobbling--sounds like a band at the 40 Watt. Keep it coming though. By the way -have you looked at Ars Magica? It seeps to have many of the same traits as your game: Founded in history, low magic level, etc. So, is F__tch Mtn. like the song "Hard Rock Candy Mtn.?"

Recently Unearthed: Two thank you's: 1) for helping keep AGS going (vs. the forces of the evil nay-sayers); and 2) for joining MOTiVE. I tried the gasoline stuff-wow those 200-kiloton thingy-ma-bobs must be bad news! I hope more of us will submit scenarios of this quality. Come down to Athens. Paul and I will take you the Corner of the Known Universe-the place where the GA Bar and The GLOBE meet. AND you can see the wonderful double-barrel cannon of Athens, G.A.

Cyber Tonto: SEND ME A WHITE COPY OF THE AD&D SHEET PLEASE. You and Stewart should from a Graphic Guru Society. And a special Welcome to the man who brought gaming supplies to Asheville.

Death to All Fanatics: There are some things that I probably shouldn't say, but since your such a good friend you will probably forgive me anyway, Null. "Wink, wink Nudge Nudge, Say no More!" "Look, your reading a Mailing Comment! Void, the Ψ stuff is great. Oh, I'll wrap it in plastic this time, I promise!

The Gaming Spouse: Carl--I saw the picture in the Polyhedron. So did you eat your cake too? Muskie worships Cthulhu! Pat--C3-NPC has seen so many incarnations I'll send the whole line next time when I've got more Credits (Standard). MORE STAR WARS.

White Noise: You're tail looks like a Muffin! CHTHON better not rise near the TMT!

The Chem Geek: MUCH, much improved over you last 'zine, How about some tales from the wild capitalist of Cleveland?

The Games A-Foot: If Jess is not here by now, Fist and the FLESHWORLD folks not only have a surprise for her character (entitled "Cop and Bust"), but we should put **Plan A** into full operation, heh, heh. . . /// Thanks for the advice. Why don't you write up Bob for Champions? (I'll help.)

Druid's Cauldron and Witch's Brew: I would print my response to your simple vs. complex article, but it would be redundant, having seen what others wrote. I must congradulate the both of you for producing the most thoughtful essays in MOTiVE. If I had not already taken my hat off to you years ago, I would do it now. Brunhild and Madam Zorba live!

Bolts of Bedevilment: Mike, I laughed until I stopped, then I laughed again. Be bold in your Monty Haulness! If I could give an award for most improved 'zine, it would go to yours.

Fishy Bits: So did they turn Geoffery into a McFish Fillet? Everyone is waiting for the chance to Moo again, so come on down!

A Column in Search Of...: Thanks for the write-up on the Stronghold game. I think that it is a great idea. I hear that the PC's are now Mutant Scum, keep us informed. Tell Robert about the Corner of the Known Universe, or at least how uncomfortable it feels to wake up on my floor. Keep watching for dolphins!

The Snake of Forever: Mr. Keyes is plagued by radically shifting tides of fortune: he nearly rips off his finger on a water heater; then he has an in with publisher; and then loses his disk with a huge chunk of his writing on it. (Including this month's MOTiVE.) So if he is not here you know why... send all charms an good thoughts his way.

Secrets of Vulcan Poetry Revealed: Sorry I can't make your game anymore, but my M.A. calls. By the way, Keith got a promotion, and he is even writing his own job description--is this the birth of Makita-Man, Lumber Lord, or quite possibly 2x4 Lad?

WHAT'S NEXT?

MOTiVE

Who Knows?

DEATH TO ALL FANATICS

MOTIVE 4

Featuring Null and Void

c/o Stewart MacWilliam, Rt#2 Box 45, Tryon, NC 28782 Telephone: (704) 894-3200 FAX: (704) 894-3485

Who Is Void?

The Void is one of the privileged few individuals in the gaming community who has an almost preternatural grasp of the Strike Rank system which forms the basis of Chaosium Games' RPG combat mechanic. Sworn to protect the arcane secrets and mysteries of this most obscure and and abstract numerological ritual from heretical derision, he scoffs at those who claim it is beyond their comprehension, and thus propose bastardized, baroque, and blasphemic alternatives, while he revels in the nigh-mystical simplicity and playability it offers. Nanna nanna boo boo.

Who Is Null?

Despite rampant rumors to the contrary, Null is not the secret love child of Amelia Airhead and Erroll Flynn, though he will not confirm or deny whether he knows what really happened to D.B. Cooper.

Null recognized that the Oriental Gentleman was Catherine Martel in disguise, but just didn't want to believe that Leland Palmer was the human host for Bob. Where's Hank?

I don't care what anybody says, the owls are exactly what they seem.

In This Issue:

Errata & Such **page 2**

Yet More Mind Games **page 3**

Echieth: An Introduction **page 25**

The Deraded Monkey 'Mech **page 37**

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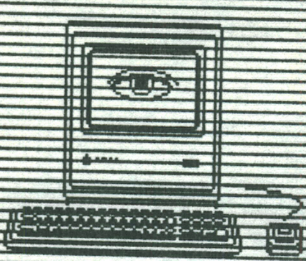


OOPS.

E-Fucking-Gad!™

When Wayne dubbed MOTIVE 3 the *plague* issue he was dead on the money. Some of you may have heard of my torture at the hands (tentacles maybe, ask Sonia and Kevin) of the U.S.P.S., well, it turns out that was just a small part of it. 'Twould seem that somewhere along the line I managed to leave out a chapter in Void's Mind Games narrative, sorry, it's included immediately following this bit of blather. Also, my identity crisis, as mentioned on page one of the *plague* issue, was worse than I thought... the DataBase idea was mine, not Void's. Bog only knows what screwups await within the pages of DTAF-4, hopefully by MOTIVE 5 I will have enlisted the services of a proofreader.

A couple other things while I've got your attention.... No Hoedown™ this time, I ran out of time, he'll definitely show up next time though, or else he'll sue me (or sit on me). ... As to the Mailing Commentary Question: I don't think I stated my position very well, I do believe that there should be discussion of issues in these pages, I just didn't like the abusive nature that some of us were using (especially myself). Mike-bashing (and Peter-bashing) can be fun and funny, but it can also just get mean, and old.

That said, let me try my hand (fingers?) at a few new-and-improved-let's-all-be-nice-to-each-other-lovey-dovey-Star-Trek™-kind-of-everyone's-really-great-semi-quasi-not-exactly-mailng-comments-but-something-pretty-damn-close:

Two Bits of Gushing Praise: 1) Mike. Great job. I already told you this, but I want it on the record, Amperion's Thoughts was (were?) hilarious. I particularly enjoyed the Tale of Yorikk. I also understand you were on time with your submission, you beat me this time too. 2) A.J. Wow. Great looking 'zine. I also really enjoyed the content, it's good to see that Jackie and Nicky aren't the only folks who have been able to rise above the flaws and restrictions of D&D to achieve Good Gaming. I think it is important to realize that beyond a certain point, the game system is unimportant... it's the players and the GM who make or break a game. Further, I applaud your approach to gamemastering, especially as it appears so similar to my own, so many gamemasters simply don't understand that you can't plan out the whole adventure ahead of time, because you have other people (namely the players) tromping around making decisions you can't expect, forming plans faster than you can counter them, and generally exercising their free will. The best laid plans of mice and GMs aft gang aglay. (or something like that). Oh yeah, not that the new-improved-New-Age=Sensitive-Null would do so, but prepare to be given some shit by other less-sensitive types about using "calvary to" threaten a Russian city. (Bojemoi, Ivan. There is a hill outside the city walls, with three crucified men on top, we must surrender.)

Sonia, I hope you type faster than I do. Q: Is this Charlotte gaming group you found the one that meets at CityFair on some weeknight? Maybe Tuesdays?

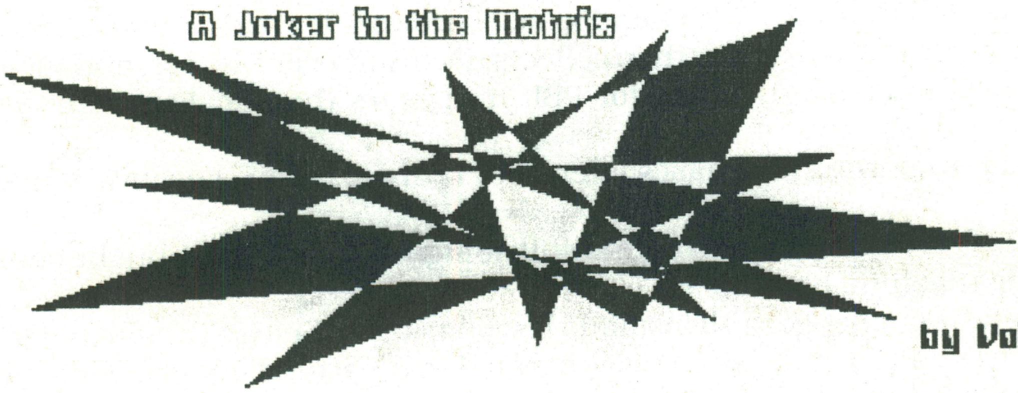
I must leap to Nicky's defence and proclaim that she is not "just a whiny bitch" (besides, she used me as a good example), she's not nearly as mean as she could be. Besides, it makes me feel a lot better about my misgivings toward tournament role-playing, to find one of our resident "Grand Masters" being bothered by some of the same problems.

Carl, I just want to briefly curse you for upstaging me with an even more bizarre and outrageous PC than Knuckles. We need to arrange a team-up.

Gil, excuse me, but I seem to have a crow feather caught in my throat. Ack.

Enough of that, Here's the missing Mind Games chapter:

A Joker in the Matrix



by Void

21 April 1990 Playdate

"It's the thought that counts!"

Counselor Darke explains that he has retained Dr. Frost as a "consultant" for her technical expertise, and is in negotiations with her about expanding the "Philanthropic Syndicate, International" into Europe. He thanks Dowser for his crucial assistance in securing background and contact information. She greets the PCs convivially, and Dowser decides he needs a drink. Psypher drives him to the Quarter, and they spend several hours in a bar. Psypher muses on how Touchstone will react, and Dowser laments the impact of women with "M" names on his life.

Psypher drags the inebriated Dowser back to "Maison Darke", where Mirage is in the kitchen making some tea and waiting up for Deuce and Torment to return from their date. After fumbling making coffee badly enough to get Mirage to do it for him, Dowser goes upstairs to check on Touchstone, but she's not in her room. A further search by Psypher reveals that her purse and some personal possessions are missing. He summons Matrix on the mindlink, but she's in bed asleep (what with it being a school night and all), so he apologizes for thoughtlessly waking her and collects Dowser to go look for Touchstone. He drives to the bus/rail terminal, and impersonating a police detective, he grills the clerk, who claims to have not seen the girl. From the cellular in the Jag, he dials his apartment, but no one answers the phone. They then proceed to PSITRAIN.

Parking the car down the road, the two of them sneak up to the horse barn and search it. Touchstone isn't there (Dowser climbs into the hayloft with a lit cigarette to make sure), and all three horses are. On the way to the house, the plastered Dowser is knocked for a loop when he treads on a hoe left lying blade-up. Soulfire confronts them (wearing a flashy pair of red jammies), and although he is beside himself at the pratfall he had deliberately set as a "security" measure, and relieved that they were not intruders, he suggests that drunken horseback rides in the middle of the night are not a good idea. The PCs apologize and go back to the car, and Soulfire goes back to bed (and presumably Ego).

Arriving back at PSIOPS, they find Deuce and Mirage "celebrating the moments of their lives" re: the date Deuce has just had. Dowser's participation is not welcome, and everyone decides to call it a night. The PCs are haunted by visions of little Ashton spending a cold and lonely Christmas on the mean streets of the Big Easy.

The next morning, Psypher rises early and, getting the info from Mirage, takes Dowser's Jag downtown to the Omni where Dr. Frost has taken a room. Appearing as Terry Dactyl (Haitian male), he leaves a message for her at the front desk, but is unable to learn her room number.

Dowser has Matrix call Touchstone on the mindlink, but she has little to say in return. Matrix is unable to get a fix on her with mindscan, so Dowser leaves her to her tire swing and resolves to try again later. Psypher then collects the hung-over Dowser, and they blow the rest of the day Christmas shopping for PSI. It appears that Dr. Frost isn't on the Christmas list.

Many clever and humorous purchases later, they retire to their respective residences to wrap.

Returning to his flat, Psypher finds there is still no sign of Touchstone, but he connects his new answering machine just in case.

The next morning, Psypher goes off to aikido lessons, where Sensei Tanaka notices his distraction. Determined to persevere, he is subjected to a particularly gruelling session in an effort to strengthen his concentration.

Meanwhile, Dowser notices over breakfast that 'Slayer is particularly bitchy this morning; she seems to be quitting caffeine, too. Darke rehashes the incident with Mentalla again, looking for more clues and trying to develop a likely hypothesis (invisible mindcontrol, maybe).

Back at his flat, the exhausted Psypher rings Dr. Frost. She's in her room, and agrees to meet him at the Café du Monde in an hour. As he still has it, he takes the Jag.

Dowser decides to go for a walk, and invites Matrix to accompany him, hoping she can find Touchstone today. They coincidentally stroll to Jackson Square.

Dr. Frost recognizes Psypher as Terry Dactyl (since she provided the ID to begin with), and they nosh on beignets and café-au-lait while they chat. She confesses to merely using the two of them in the hopes of getting herself an intro to PSI, and apologizes for abandoning them when pressing matters called her back to England. She confirms that she had herself appointed guardian of the girl to study her extraordinary powers, and confides that Ashton "probably" blames her for the death of her parents. Psypher acts convinced of her veracity, and she offers monetary compensation to both of them, but is politely rebuffed. After a bit of mutual posturing, she says she has to leave, as she's due at PSITECH to run some more tests on Mind Slayer. As she departs, she reminds Psypher of her earlier advice to "trust no one".

Psypher rings Matrix on the mindlink to inquire as to Dowser's whereabouts, and is almost as surprised by her "he's right here with me" answer as he is to notice the mindlink terminating just across the way in the Square.

He joins them, and discretely fills Dowser in on the conversation he has just had with Dr. Frost. Dowser is not sorry he missed it.

The PCs then have Matrix again try to locate Touchstone via mindscan, and she succeeds in getting a range and bearing fix. Consulting a map, Dowser deduces that

Touchstone is at the Omni. The PCs and Matrix hop in the Jag.

Arriving at the Omni, Psypher impersonates Dr. Frost. At the front desk, the clerk confirms that there are no messages for "her" but that he sent her "daughter" up to the room with a spare key a few minutes ago. Still unable to get the room number, the PCs rely on Matrix's mindscan to guide them to the correct room. They knock on the door of the luxury suite, and eventually persuade Touchstone to let them in. She has been busily ransacking the room and is rather distraught. Psypher manages to calm her down, while Dowser sets about fruitlessly searching and trying to tidy up.

She expresses her dismay at having Dr. Frost here in PSI, and what great danger she and the PCs are in. At Psypher's urging, she recounts her childhood of being raised British aristocracy, the tragic death of her parents, and "Aunt Karen" being assigned guardianship of her. She tells how Dr. Frost "tortured" her like a "guinea pig", and how she fled to the States in hopes of contacting PSI and getting some sort of asylum. At Psypher's inquiry, she also recants how she read Dr. Frost's mind and learned of her parent's murder. Despite her nigh-hysterical outbursts, she explicitly does not mention "Motivator" in Matrix's presence.

Psypher tells her of his conversation with Dr. Frost, and what Darke told him about her "consulting". Touchstone reveals to the PCs and Matrix that the Counselor has decided to retain Dr. Frost, one of the world's foremost experts in metahuman physiology and genetics, because Mind Slayer is pregnant with Psymon's baby, and due in late April. It was intended to be a "joyous surprise announcement" to the assembled staff Christmas morning.

Flabbergasted at this news, the PCs decide they need to go somewhere and think this new development over at length. At Psypher's tacit suggestion, Touchstone persuades Matrix that this is all very hush-hush and it would be best if the entire meeting and conversation were not discussed with anyone else at PSI. After a brief discussion of the possible merits of torching the room to cover for the fact that it has been disturbed and Dr. Frost's photographic memory will probably tip her, the decision is made to simply leave, and let her find out anyway.

After taking the girls for pizza, the PCs get Touchstone a room at the Residence Inn which they can rent for cash and stash her off the streets in. Dowser, using an apparently latent ability he'd been practising up on, establishes a mindlink with Psypher, and a separate one with Touchstone. Psypher gives her his phone number, and after getting assurances that she'll be alright ands a promise to stay in touch via mindlink, the PCs head back to PSIOPS. They reiterate the need for secrecy to Matrix, and call it a night.

……

Welcome to this, the final installment of the **Operation: Mind Games** campaign log. In keeping with the precedent- and trend-setting nature of this narrative, in addition to the further appended list of relevant inspirations, this issue's excerpt also comes with soundtrack sources.

For starters, play Russ Ballard's tune "Voices" over the opening credits. Mood thus established, switch to something light, like Blondie's "(I'm Always) Touched By Your Presence". When Bender has her problems, I would suggest a cut off the New Order album FACD.50 Movement, "Senses". For the climactic conclusion of the session, try the " O Fortuna" from Carl Orloff's Carmina Burana. It's slightly overused these days, but it's still a fine piece of music.

The next session should establish mood with something along the lines of Van Morrisson's "Moondance", from the album of the same name. Follow up with "Stalakdrama" from Yello's big hit album Stella. When the problems start up, try Slayer's thrash cover of

"Inna-Gadda-Da-Vida". Finally, during the resolution of that particular mess, I suggest John Hiatt's obscure "Death By Misadventure", not to be confused with a song by Ted Nugent with the same name.

That said, I must now turn my attention to the Giving Credit Where Credit Is Due Department. First off, I must acknowledge the inimitable Mrs. Emma Peel and her breakthrough fashion sense, which is the motivation [oops, what a giveaway!] for Dr. Frost's snazzy actionwear. And speaking of Diana Rigg, there's a little film in which she start with Oliver Reed called The Assassination Bureau, Ltd. which is a delightful romp about a secret society planning world domination in Victorian times. Sadly, Oliver Reed is getting a bit long in the tooth, and is rather too much on the gigantic side to play opposite Amanda Pays, who has replaced Karen Kopins as Null's casting choice for the Good Doctor, having impressed him in a similar role recently. Personally, I'm still partial to Jaqueline Pearce. Kopins has been recast as Mind Slayer, providing her an opportunity for some Farrah Fawcett/Burning Bed-style deglamorization.

I must also acknowledge a debt to John Sacret Young, who has been coming up with truly inspired titles for China Beach, even though I thought of many of them first. Oh well. I wonder if Dana Delany can still do her Russian accent.

And no mention of my inspirations would be complete without a nod to Eating Raoul's Doris the Dominatrix, and Mega-City One's very own PSI Division Judge Cassandra Anderson.

I expect next issue to feature a follow-up article in this space on New Mental Powers which some (like Jon Monk) may find useful for dealing with problems such as induced insanity in Champions™. Additionally, there's an epilogue in the works of What Really Happened in Operation: Mind Games and an overview of the impact of "The Double-Secret Crisis on the Infinite Multiverses" on the campaign world and its associated facets.

In closing, I must apologize for the re-appearance of The Eye of Horus Egyptian take-out franchises, but it's become my signature schtick, despite my best efforts to the contrary. You see, it comes in this nifty little yellow and blue cardboard pyramid, all covered with mysterious hieroglyphs and such, and somehow always manages to stay hot no matter how long it takes you to get it home — Oh, never mind.

Now, get ready for a final bit of wetwork as our intrepid PCs plunge literally headlong into The Killing Zone.

Our Story So Far:

Rod "**Dowser**" Downs, a psychic specializing in tracking individuals, is hired by **Dr. Karen Frost**, a neuroscientist, to rescue her psionic niece, Ashton "**Touchstone**" Coventry from the clutches of **PSI**, a criminal organization of mentalists. **Psypher** is a shapeshifting former member of **PSI** who's also recruited for the task.

Once the pair infiltrate **PSI**, they learn from **Touchstone** that **Dr. Frost** is actually the villainous **Motivator**. As **Motivator** is even more dangerous than **PSI**, **Psypher** and **Dowser** decide to remain undercover in **PSI**, while attempting to exact their respective vengeance upon its leadership, in addition to staying alive.

The villainess Adrienne "**Ego**" D'Estang is recruited, and becomes involved with Harold "**Soulfire**" Gripp. **Touchstone** flees once **Dr. Frost** gets herself invited to join **PSI**. With a bit of persuasion from **Psypher** and **Dowser**, she eventually rejoins the organization, but a second level of intrigue has been revealed, as it is now clear that **Dr. Frost** has some ulterior motive, and **Counselor Darke**, the acting head of **PSI**, has put some complex plan in motion to seize control of the group and expand its sphere of operations internationally, using the pregnant **Mind Slayer** and the comatose **Psymon** as catspaws.

Meanwhile, **Psypher** encounters **Mentalla**, a member of the notorious villain group **Eurostar**, which **Psypher** and **Dowser** had tangled with in France while attempting to bring Le Maistre in from the cold. She seeks his assistance in an attempt on the life of none other than Albert "**Dr. Destroyer**" Zerstoiten, the most powerful and infamous metahuman in the world.

On a suggestion from **Counselor Darke**, **Psypher** and **Dowser** lead a brief expedition back to Las Vegas in an attempt to recruit Meryl "**Bender**" Jordan, whom they had encountered previously, into the organization. Further duplicity is uncovered during this "Lifestyles of the Telepathic and Manipulative" excursion, and **Dowser** and Natalia "**Impulse**" Soyev end up becoming lovers as a result.

The team returns to Nawlins, where the intrigue has been building in their absence, and the storm is about to break...

6 June 1990 Playdate

Monsters from the Id

—or—

Wombat Patrol

—or—

Devil With a Blue Dress On

—or—

Out of the Loop

—or—

"Don't you wish you were a telepath?"
"No, I couldn't trust myself."

The team plus one returns to Nawlins, and catches a taxi back to Maison Darke. The PCs haul Bender's steamer trunks up to a room on the third floor with the rest of the girls. It is Monday afternoon.

Darke debriefs and dismisses the PCs, then summons Mirage for his lengthy meeting with Bender. Dowser looks for a flat in the Quarter, and retrieves his Jag. Psypher calls Sensei Tanaka and arranges to bring Mr. Downs to his lesson tomorrow. Impulse gives Dowser his own key to her apartment.

Upon receiving their presents from Psypher, the girls gleefully commence to "Vogue" about. Touchstone is shocked to learn that Bender is here, and surreptitiously advises that Psypher "lock up the silverware" because the girl is trouble. When Psypher suggests that he intends to take her out on the town, Touchstone advises him to "take back-up". After Angela models her camisole, he is invited to leave so they can proceed with "girl talk" about certain male members of the organization.

Changing back into Limato-san, he then invites Bender out to show her the town. As he's waiting on her to get ready to leave, Darke quietly advises him to "take back-up". To Psypher's inquiry, Darke responds that Mind Slayer is out shopping and therefore not available. Psypher suggests dinner by the river, and using Matrix (to avoid demonstrating their private mindlinks) co-ordinates with Dowser and Impulse to meet in about two hours.

Bender goes back upstairs to get "redaye" for what has become a dinner date (the clotheshorse has decided to affect a southern belle accent, it seems). Despite the transmorph's insistence that Ms. Jordan mandates an elegant set of wheels, Darke awkwardly refuses to let them borrow his Mercedes, and instead has Psypher get the keys to the Taurus wagon from Mirage.

Meanwhile, Dowser has tossed on some "yuppie casual" and has proceeded to his favorite restaurant down by the Farmers' Market to get a table. Impulse calls him over their private 'link to come pick her up. He explains that he can't, and then 'links to Matrix to relay a message to Psypher to fetch Impulse. Matrix comments how nice it would be if the PCs would get their private mindlink back. Psypher does actually use the private 'link, as he needs to call Dowser back to get the address of Impulse's loft.

After a brief discussion between the PCs about the feasibility of "teleport commuting", Bender comes downstairs. She's wearing a fairly unassuming yet nonetheless killer knit dress, in a tasteful electric blue. Apologizing for the car, Psypher escorts her to the Taurus. ("Your Majesty seems to have left her Orb and Scepter at home?" "That's okay, I'm sure yours will do nicely [tweak].")

They get Impulse and rendezvous at the restaurant where Dowser is waiting. For dinner, they consume "Crayfish by the pound, and Dixie Beer by the pint", then decide to take Meryl on a walking tour of the Quarter. On Dowser's suggestion, they take her to Preservation Hall, which she finds "quaint". Psypher speculates that she's more of a "Rat Pack Groupie" and has a little "too much class" to appreciate it. ("I'm not like everyone around here who's slept with Rob Lowe!" "It could be arranged...")

Bender decides that she wants FroYo [that's *Frozen Yogurt*, pilgrims]. So does Impulse, so Dowser reads the minds of passersby to find some. They end up going to the mall in the old Jax Brewery to get it.

Bender decides that she needs to powder her nose, and Dowser locks on to her as Impulse accompanies her to the ladies'. Afterwards, they all stroll through and around Jackson Square, and at Dowser's suggestion, end up at Café du Monde.

Bender asks them all how they got involved with PSI. Impulse goes first, telling her tale [as printed in the sourcebook]. Dowser plays at being a "man of mystery" and shares as little of his origin and dealings with PSI as he can manage. Psypher, on the other hand, remarks that his first memories are of PSI, in its original incarnation under Dr. Poe. He had fled from the organization when it collapsed, and thus didn't meet Impulse until he came in from the cold a few months ago.

While all this is going on, Dowser sees something vaguely reptilian slither behind a pillar several feet away, but refrains from mentioning it at the time. He decides to secretly read Bender's mind, and extracts the details of her conversation with Counselor Darke. Aside from her mild amusement at the typically megalomaniacal and slightly sinister rhetoric of the lecture, he notes that she doesn't really see what's so bad about the man.

At this point, Psypher detects some sort of movement over behind a bit of shrubbery. Bender denies having anything to do with it, and Psypher moves to investigate. He gives Dowser his phaser, since the clairvoyant had neglected to bring his own, and tells him to cover him. ("If your name is Braun, I've got a phaser with your name on it.") Impulse quietly asks as to what's going on.

Cautiously moving in, Psypher spies something small and furry lurking in the bushes. As he gets closer, it gets spooked, and scampers off to jump in the river. Psypher isn't quite sure, but it looked rather like a large wombat. [Or, as T. DuPont might say, "One of them pesky Louisiana River Wombats, I reckon..."]

Psypher remarks that it appears to have been a wombat or something. Bender calls him "my hero", and again denies having anything to do with it. Dowser mentions his earlier sighting of something reptilian, Bender once again denies having anything to do with it, and tired of being pestered, declares that she wants to go for a walk.

As the foursome strolls, Psypher begins to notice that things are getting weird. Neon signs are starting to writhe and pulse, and the music drifting out of the various bars is oddly distorted. Impulse also notices, and calls Dowser over their 'link. Observing that moving objects are beginning to leave trails, he thinks it is quite likely that Bender is high. Unable to get outside of her area of effect, he reads her mind. Her consciousness is in a most strange state. Whereas her nominally heightened sensitivity is almost more than he can handle, she is currently so wired that he fringes on sensory overload. By virtue of his auxiliary mental defenses, he can disassociate himself from her illusions enough to notice that she seems to be getting increasingly klutzy. As they all walk along, she gets progressively worse and worse, eventually announcing that she wants to go dancing. Psypher is becoming very concerned, and Impulse wishes to take her to PSITECH for analysis.

Upon Psypher's suggestion to Bender that he knows a really good club they can all go to, they return to the restaurant and get their cars. Impulse and Dowser hop in his Jag, and Psypher puts Bender in the Taurus, where she turns the stereo up really loud. (A Taurus with a Blaupunkt?) They all drive to PSITECH. Meryl remarks that "it doesn't look like a club", but Psypher reassures her that "it's a special club", and she'll like it a lot.

Impulse gets them into the deserted facility with her key ("She's a member..."), and Psypher remarks to Bender that it's a good club. ("Notice that they're playing the same song you were listening to on the radio?") Bender says that she doesn't think so, and makes a break for the door. Impulse scrambles to get a hypodermic. Since they locked the door behind them, Bender can't get out, and grabs a chair from the lobby in order to smash the glass. Psypher also grabs the chair, but as soon as he does, it becomes searingly hot in his hands. Taking no damage, he calmly ["Acting!"] tells Bender to let go before she burns herself. Dowser sets the phaser on kill and fires at the chair, hoping to destroy it. Unfortunately, the chair, being metal, conducts the energy of the shot into Psypher and Bender as it is destroyed. Psypher is unhurt, but Bender is down, burnt and bleeding badly. Dowser 'links to Matrix and tells her to wake Dr. DeVille and summon him to PSITECH immediately. Concentrating on what was previously only a theoretical ability, Psypher regenerates the badly wounded Bender, whom Impulse, having found a syringe, promptly gives a generous dose of Pluto, to suppress her mental powers. They then carry the unconscious Bender into the lab. Impulse 'links to Matrix and tells her that Dr. DeVille won't be needed. Convinced that he's not on the way after all, she then soundly chastises Dowser for his "smooth move" of almost involving the last person they want underfoot right now. She then turns her full attention to Bender. Cutting the "ruined" dress off (fortunately it was cotton, not synthetic, and didn't melt to the flesh), with perhaps a trace of undue enjoyment, she sends Dowser to get Ms. Jordan's purse. Psypher holds the front door, and lends him the keys to the wagon.

They dump the purse out on a lab table, and upon finding some suspicious chemical, Impulse goes to start up the spectroscope, telling Dowser to make coffee. She refuses to show him how the spectroscope works (being pissed at him for summoning DeVille). The decision is made to call Dr. Frost, but it's too late, and Psypher can't get the operator to ring the room. Dowser tries a few times to locate her with his mindscan, but misses. The PCs lament the fact that Dr. Frost isn't 'linked to Matrix.

Dowser is tired from "another long day", and decides to just wait on the coffee. Psypher goes to the Omni, and getting past the front desk as Dr. Frost, changes into T. Dactyl in the elevator. [Dr. Frost knows all the permutations other than T. Limato.]

Outside her suite, he knocks on her door. Eventually, she answers, and Psypher notes that even with no makeup and her hair a mess at this god-awful hour in the morning, she *still* manages to look fabulous. He hastily explains that "we've brought in Bender", and to her confused response "why?", confesses that "we didn't know any better". He also mentions that he suspects the involvement of an apparent "mutual friend" of the doctor's and Ms. Jordan's. When Dr. Frost has no idea what he's talking about, he gently gently reminds her of her casual remarks back in the Café du Monde about Notion. She brushes the topic off, complaining that she's always the last to know when something happens, what with not being mindlinked with the rest of PSI. Making him wait in the hall, she reappears in a few moments in her "actionwear" jumpsuit, toting her gadget bag. They take the Taurus back to PSITECH, where the doctor lets them in with her own key.

By this time, Impulse has a tentative spectroscopic analysis on the chemicals found in Bender's blood and purse. Dr. Frost concurs with her evaluation that the organic radical appears to be a manufactured hallucinogen, a particularly high-quality version of Ecstasy.

Dr. Frost asks if Dr. DeVille knows about this incident with Bender, and Impulse replies that they've begged him off for now. Psypher mentions that the girl was also electrocuted, and describes the struggle in the foyer. Dr. Frost remarks that "it's not like her" to freak out like that, to which Psypher replies that it's "our fault", recounting the evening. Dr. Frost then says that the PCs have done enough for tonight, and realizing that they have aikido lessons first thing in the morning, the PCs leave.

Leaving the Taurus at PSITECH, they take the Jag to Psypher's flat, where Dowser, using the "stake-out kit" he stores in the car, crashes as well.

The next morning, the alarm wakes them about an hour before class. Dowser drives back to PSIOPS to get some sweats, and after a quick breakfast, Psypher jogs to the dojo (carrying the gi Sensei Tanaka gave him, rather than merely "instant changing"). At PSIOPS, Mirage asks Dowser where he was, and her eyebrows again climb up her skull when he tells her he stayed with Dowser.

PCs eventually arrive at the dojo, and after Sensei Tanaka agrees to teach Mr. Buchannon's friend Mr. Downs, the lessons consume the rest of the morning. Afterwards, Psypher expresses his desire to learn midwifery, and obtains a suggestion of a likely address from his rather surprised teacher.

The PCs do lunch. Afterwards, Dowser commences moving into his new apartment, and Psypher phones the midwife. Dowser takes a taxi to PSITRAIN to get the van, and Psypher takes the Jag to PSITECH. Dowser gets the TransSport from Soulfire (who appears quite lovey-dovey with Ego). At PSITECH, Psypher checks in on Dr. Frost's "patient", and finds Impulse sacked out on a cot. Bender requests a dress and some dinner, telling Psypher to "surprise" her (she's a size 6). He motors, and buys her a nice dress (making sure it fits by "doing" her) and gets enough Egyptian take-out [hmmm...] so Impulse can eat, too. Dowser refuses to come out and get Impulse, so when Bender is discharged, Psypher lets Impulse take the Jag home so she can get some much-needed sleep, and he takes Bender back to PSIOPS in the Taurus.

While Dowser moves, Bender pouts. Psypher plays her, apologizing profusely and stroking her ego. Eventually, Dowser finishes moving (since he hasn't that much stuff to begin with) and takes the van back to PSITRAIN. He calls Psypher over the 'link, and is most irate to learn that the shapeshifter gave Impulse the Jag. They argue about Impulse at some length; Psypher explaining that she is expecting an apology from him for the DeVille thing, whereas Dowser feels he has done nothing wrong, and is waiting for her to apologize for chewing his ass for no good reason. Eventually. Psypher takes the Taurus out to get him, admonished by Mirage to put some gas in it, as she needs to run errands tomorrow.

Meanwhile, out at PSITRAIN, Soulfire and Ego are having a spat, but Dowser is unable to eavesdrop and learn precisely what about. Soulfire doesn't respond to Dowser's offer to blow off a little steam on a defenseless cigarette, but is eventually persuaded to let Dowser take him out for a beer. Psypher shows up shortly, and they go to a college bar to commiserate. Psypher quips "do we never learn?"

Soulfire laments that Ego is quite "headstrong" [there's that pun again...] and that she's taken a dislike to Medusa. Ego seems to be going out of her way to disagree with her on everything, and the "hate campaign" seems to be sowing the seeds of dissent among the students. He also remarks that as much fun as he's been having, it was Darke's idea for him to start up with her. He than asks Dowser how things are going with Impulse, and in response to Dowser's complaints, notes that she *is* a redhead. They hoist some "Prairie Fires" [as in: "Oh my god, STOP!"] to their lady friends. Soulfire inquires as to how things went in Vegas, and confirms that Ms. Jordan is the Party Queen herself. Dowser asks him if he knows how many times PSI has tried to get her, and Soulfire replies that frankly, he's lost count. Dowser recounts the tale of what she did to the PCs' team. Soulfire, referring to her as "a real piece of work", reveals that she made a complete fool of him, at one point actually getting him to set fire to his own clothes. They slam some "Fireballs" in a toast to her.

After further discussion about "terminal PMS" and other "male bonding" things, the PCs dump him back at PSITRAIN to a rather menacing "Harry, is that you?" and after Dowser gets a fix on him, they beat a hasty retreat. Psypher drops Dowser at his new flat. Dowser instructs him to get either an apology or the Jag from Impulse. Leaving him, Psypher tops up the Taurus and drops it off at PSIOPS, deciding to take the long walk back to his flat and sleep late in the morning.

The next day, Dowser sets up his apartment (utilities and whatnot). He calls out to PSITECH looking for Impulse. He asks Marci, the receptionist for the Advanced Research Group, if he might speak with Ms. Soyev. She comes to the phone and is confused by his ranting about her being in a snit and demanding his car. She angrily explains that she wants him to apologize, and when he refuses, she hangs up and goes back to her work.

Psypher gets a cab out to PSITECH, but is chagrined to find that Impulse has driven her Accord to work. He gets the Jag, and returns her keys to her (she'll get a ride from one of the techs), and takes the Jag to Dowser. Dowser is out walking and shopping (buying a gi, among other things). They go for some dinner, stopping to get Psypher's phone book along the way. Psypher looks through the yellow pages in search of a craftsman who might make a stuffed wombat for him. As they have aikido lessons tomorrow, they soon decide to call it a night, and crash at their flats.

The next morning is consumed by aikido lessons. On their way to lunch afterwards, they are startled by a sudden cry for help over the mindlink from Matrix. After a brief plea to someone or other to "Stop!", the 'link goes silent, and the PCs are unable to raise her.

Dowser scans for her, and finds her at school (it's Thursday midday). With Psypher driving, they race toward the kids' school. Matrix seems to be most unconscious. Dowser calls Impulse over their 'link, and she emphatically tells him that she's got her hands full, he needs to get to PSITECH, and that she's trying to get Omega on the telephone. Psypher turns the car around, and they head for the labs. Dowser reads Impulse's mind, and learns that she's trying to keep Counselor Darke from bleeding to death. He 'scans, and finds that she's at PSIOPS. Mind Slayer, however, is not. [Anyone who is invincible must be eliminated immediately...]

Impulse, when queried over the 'link, reveals that she told 'Slayer herself, and that Dowser needs to call PSITECH and warn them. From the cellular in the Jag, he finds that they're not answering the phone just now. Impulse confesses that she told 'Slayer about Darke and DeVille this morning, and she seemed to take quietly, even contemplatively. But when Matrix called out, Natalia raced back to PSIOPS, fearing the worst.

At this point, Dowser scans for Touchstone. He finds her in class, and she heard Matrix's cry but doesn't know what happened, and under pretense of going to the little girls' room, bolts out of class to check on Matrix, who's presumably in the hands of the school nurse. Dowser 'scans and finds Mind Slayer at PSITECH.

The PCs arrive at PSITECH, and having no word yet from Touchstone, proceed through where the front door used to be. Dowser is still tracking 'Slayer, back in lab #4. Along the way, they encounter the rather messy corpse of Dr. DeVille, as well as that of "Gizmo" Richards. Those techs still in possession of some of their wits are frantically debating whether or not to call the police, but one of them is mindlinked to Omega, and persuades them that he is en route.

Entering lab #4, the PCs find a barely-mindcontrolled 'Slayer holding Dr. Frost in a telekinetic deathgrip. The doctor is able to mouth instructions to "shoot her" before 'Slayer realizes the new threat of Psypher and swings her into him. Dr. Frost is stunned by the blow, and is unable to warn Psypher not to use his "Brainfry" on the pregnant 'Slayer, which he promptly does [Psypher, remind me again why it is that you're studying aikido]. As she doesn't have her force field on, Dowser is able to use the NND setting on his phaser to knock Mind Slayer soundly unconscious. Recovering, Dr. Frost angrily chases them out to "secure the perimeter or something" and begins work on the wounded and profusely bleeding 'Slayer, whom she asserts is now in danger of miscarrying.

The PCs decide it would be a good idea to check on Psymon. As they find his room and begin checking him out, Omega, in his upgraded battlesuit [which is pretty impressive], finds them. He orders them to drop their weapons (they comply with alacrity), and *then proceeds to telepathically interrogate them.* Checking that Psymon is okay, he then instructs them to "come with me". The accompany him to lab #4.

Dr. Frost refuses Psypher's help on Mind Slayer, whom she is barely able to stabilize (since meatball surgery is a little out of her line), as she considers him responsible for much of her condition to begin with. ("Fine, let someone else save your life next time!") Omega gets a quick briefing from everyone present, and assumes command.

Dowser calls Touchstone, who reports that Matrix collapsed in class and is with the nurse. She also reports that it appears that Matrix was ego attacked.

Omega inquires after Darke. Impulse reports to Dowser that the pieces of him she can find are all dead. Omega instructs Dowser to secure PSIOPS, and orders Psypher to fetch Matrix from her school.

Psypher commandeers a car, a blue Supra, from one of the techs (the PSIGUARDer who is 'linked to Omega, actually), and the PCs roll.

Impersonating Medusa, Psypher collects Touchstone, Matrix, and Force from their school.

Dowser arrives at PSIOPS, and spends some time comforting the quite upset (nearly hysterical) Impulse. Upon his approach, Dowser has noticed that Mirage still seems to be out running errands in the Taurus. Mindscanning, Dowser can't locate Omega anywhere.

Touchstone covertly learns everything Psypher knows about what has happened. ("Aside from being furious with me, your Aunt Karen is fine." "But she's not my—" "I know, *I know*.") Psypher also notices Force and Touchstone making eye contact, obviously having a private conversation. Eventually, Psypher and his entourage arrive back at PSITECH.

At PSITECH, Omega has debriefed and sent home most of the techs, and the Nawlins section of PSIINT has been mobilized to provide security; all four PSIGUARDs are present, and armed. Dowser has Psypher check and make sure that Psymon is still there. Dowser wonders where Bender is. Her purse seems to be gone from PSIOPS. Psypher, making a closer observation, decided that Psymon really doesn't look so good after all. Omega, when summoned, agrees, and goes to look for Dr. Frost, telling Psypher to "stay with him".

Omega returns with Dr. Frost, who studies Psymon and confirms that his vital signs are slipping. Psypher speculates that it might be due to his mindlink with the injured 'Slayer. Dr. Frost confirms this hypothesis, and takes the opportunity to again lay blame on Psypher. She reads him the Riot Act, right in front of Omega. However, she also tells Omega that she read Mind Slayer and learned of the conspiracy, and implies that Psypher (and Dowser for that matter), knew nothing of the duplicity by Darke and DeVille. At this point, she has to return to 'Slayer, and has Psypher bring Psymon up to her makeshift OR. Omega instructs the PSIGUARD to police up the bodies and sends one of them (Justin Henry) to PSIOPS to further secure the site.

When Justin Henry arrives at PSIOPS, Dowser reports to him. The PSIGUARDer tells the clairvoyant that he'll hold the fort, and that Omega has, over the 'link, ordered Dowser to bring Impulse to PSITECH, so she can examine Matrix.

Over their private 'link, Psypher wonders if Bender is out somewhere scoring more drugs. Dowser replies that with any luck, she's gone back home to Vegas. At this point, Omega decides that he needs to go to PSITRAIN and get Soulfire.

Meanwhile, Dr. Frost opens Psymon's head in an attempt to surgically sever his mindlink with 'Slayer. However, her gizmos are unsuccessful, and she starts to lose him. She summons Psypher, who, at her urging, performs an emergency regeneration on him. Although healed, he remains unconscious.

Dowser and Impulse arrive. Impulse gives Matrix a light stimulant to try and bring her around. Dr. Frost mentions that she could use some help from Impulse, who goes to assist her.

Dowser asks her over their private 'link if Ego has telepathy. Impulse answers that she doesn't think so.

Matrix wakes up, and Dowser has her find Bender. Ms. Jordan is on the docks. Dowser has her locate Mirage, who is at a nearby mall. When Matrix asks how everyone is doing, Dowser is circumspect, but Touchstone (with a bit of contempt) tells her what's happened, and little Tannis faints.

Dowser tells the PSIGUARDer present (Edward Johns, whose car Psypher had borrowed earlier) to inform Omega that Mirage and Bender are okay, and that Matrix has passed out.

Over their 'link, Dowser tells Psypher that Bender is on the docks, but he doesn't have an exact location on her. Touchstone tells Dowser to leave Tannis alone. Noting her eye contact with Force, and the look on his face, Dowser sends him off to find some "smelling salts", and as the boy turns to leave, reads his mind, discovering that Touchstone has told him "Not now".

Dr. Frost finishes with Psypher and sends him off, telling him (sarcasm again?) that he may very well have saved Psymon's life. Unfortunately, Psypher has little immediate opportunity to wrestle with his conscience. ("There's no right or wrong here, just psychotics.")

Psypher asks Edward Johns to inquire of Omega if the PCs can go fetch Bender. Omega's response is "Don't we already have enough problems?"

Dowser scans for Bender, but doesn't have enough telepathy left to contact her. He eventually loses her.

So, the PCs get in the Jag, and go find her. She wants to go back to the house. Psypher briefs her on what's happened, but her attitude is basically "So what?"

Omega shows up with Soulfire at PSIOPS. Psypher rats on the junkie Bender to Omega, but the man has a lot of other things on his mind. He dismisses all of them, and advises them that should just lay low until contacted. Dowser wants to slip out to PSITECH, but Omega says no.

Dowser drops Psypher off at his flat, and goes on home. Psypher calls the midwife instructor to cancel his lessons. Impulse shows up at Dowser's late. She apologizes [exactly what for is kind of unclear], and they crash.

1 July 1990 Playdate

"Our work here is done."
—or—
"It's funny when it happens to someone else!"
—or—
"What is that sound I do not hear?"
—or—
"I never drive faster than I can Psi!"
—or—
"At least there's no Danger Room!"
—or—
"Does the phrase 'burnt beyond recognition' hold any special meaning for you?"
—or—
Who Died and Left You In Charge?

The PCs sleep in the next day. Eventually, Impulse gets up and heads off for work sans breakfast. Psypher jogs in to PSIOPS, where Omega and Mirage are trying to get the office in order. Meryl Jordan has also slept in, and the kids have all gone off to school. Dowser, having no real food in his apartment, eventually decides to go grocery shopping. Omega sends Mirage out to PSITECH to courier some stuff. Psypher has parked himself on the couch, waiting for Meryl. Eventually, she comes down in a nifty cable-knit sweater, extraordinarily tight faded Levis, and some L.A. GEAR high-tops. Psypher looks futilely for Darke's spare keys ("You're getting a ride in this car yet, Meryl..."): Omega has no idea where they are, either. Counselor Darke's body was removed in the night via the hearse. [Remember the hearse, folks?] So, resignedly, Psypher and Bender take the streetcar into town for *still more* shopping.

Psypher calls Dowser (out shopping himself) over their mindlink, and has him call Impulse, requesting that she acquire the car keys from Darke's personal effects. She promises to look into it. She also reports that it appears that Psymon will be OK, and that Mind Slayer is under careful sedation.

Shortly, Matrix broadcasts over the group 'link that Omega wants all the available adult personnel not at PSITECH to convene at PSISCHOOL ASAP. Dowser stashes the groceries in his flat and fetches Psypher and Bender in his Jag. They arrive at PSISCHOOL about half an hour later.

Mirage has returned to PSIOPS, but Omega's bike, the hearse, the TransSport, and some of the PSIGUARD are all at PSISCHOOL. The PSIGUARD are crawling over the place with PSISCANNERs and doing forensics and such. Omega ushers Dowser into the kitchen and shows him the suicide note. Distressed over the collapse of her family and the organization, the rejection and death of her lover, and the hopelessness of it all, Mother Medusa has hanged herself while Soulfire was dropping the kids off at regular school. Dowser relays this to Psypher, who is outside with Bender observing the PSIGUARD loading the body into the hearse. Despite Madeline Poe's history of suicidal tendencies, the PCs are naturally suspicious of Ego, who Omega informs them has gone missing. Still, since she's mindlinked to Matrix, there's no immediate need to pursue her, particularly since Omega suspects she's fled the country, and being wanted on several international warrants herself, is not likely to contact any law enforcement authorities. Besides, she can always be located and dealt with later. By the same token, however, and in light of the recent rampage by 'Slayer, Dowser expresses concern that Matrix may be at risk from the unbroken 'link with the fugitive. On Dowser's suggestion, Omega sends Soulfire to pull Matrix out of school. Dowser goes as backup, and they take his Jag. Dowser clandestinely checks with Psypher to confirm that the shapeshifter put the halo back in his trunk when he returned the car.

During the drive, Dowser uses his invisible telepathy to read Soulfire. Harry is troubled and confused by Adrienne's behavior, and is wracked with doubt. It *was* Darke's idea to seduce her in the first place, but he had really begun to care for her, and thought they had a real relationship, and that he could trust her, and so on.

Meanwhile, Psypher searches Ego's room, and comes to concur with the PSIGUARD's conclusion that she's gone, moved out. On his way to use the kitchen phone, he notices that Bender is beginning to get in the way of the PSIGUARD. In response to Psypher's hypothesis about Ego's route out of town, Omega responds that the PSIGUARD has not found any leads yet in airline reservations, but of course, she could have used an assumed name and paid cash (she is, after all, an accomplished terrorist). It's about midday and Omega mentions that he wants Impulse here when the kids all get home from school.

Soulfire refuses Dowser's request for a light, and goes into the school to get Tannis. Deciding to hold off informing her of the "suicide", they simply tell her she might be in danger because they can't find Ego, whom they think is deserting PSI.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, Bender has found the horses and is busily amusing herself by using her powers on them. [This is why she has no pets, they all run away...] Dowser and company return. Omega dismisses all of them, and takes Matrix with him. Bender continues to play with horses a bit, until she and the PCs are again "dismissed" by Omega. They resume shopping with Bender.

Psypher suggests that they solicit Meryl's discerning eye in picking something out for Dowser to give Impulse, but Dowser brusquely refuses any of Psypher's efforts to "help", chastising him for his previous attempts to facilitate their romance, i.e. the "Where's my Jag?" fiasco.

Dowser calls Impulse over their 'link, and tells her what has happened. She's already up to speed, and reports that the PSIGUARD is bringing in Mrs. Poe's body now. She asks if it is likely that Ego was framed, and not trusting PSI to exonerate her, has fled in fear of her life. This seems unlikely to the PCs, but Dowser ditches Psypher and Bender and runs back out to PSISCHOOL, which he finds deserted.

He checks the handwriting on a grocery list he finds stuck to the refrigerator, and comparing it to his recollection of the suicide note, feels it is likely that Medusa wrote both, although the note seems to be scrawled under some stress. Pocketing the list, he leaves a copy in its place, and heads to PSITECH. En route, he 'links to Impulse, and confirms that the PSIGUARD has the note there.

Out at PSITECH, Dowser spies the note (in a ziplock bag, no less) with some other junk awaiting shredding. He pockets the note, and shreds the remaining evidence and office trash.

He then checks in on Psymon, and finds him still groggy. Dowser greets him and introduces himself. Psymon is a little confused, but does eventually recall, with some alarm, Mr. Downs' involvement in the Pinchard Affair. Impulse backs up Dowser's assertion that he's now in PSI, and was instrumental in helping bring Psymon back around.

Dowser leaves PSITECH and parks his Jag, intending to spend a day or two, and a little shoe leather, looking to contact an Obeah Woman, or some similar psychic.

Omega, Soulfire, and Matrix go to PSISCHOOL to await the kids' return from school. Dowser ruminates about becoming a "truck drivin' clairvoyant detective in Boise". Still having no luck on the Mercedes key quest, Psypher borrows the Taurus wagon from Mirage (and knowing the drill, promises to put gas in it).

After a private crack to Dowser about Mind Slayer as "The Ultimate Repo: This insane pregnant woman flies after you and hacks you apart with her mind", Psypher takes Bender out to dinner ("Whatever Meryl wants, Meryl gets... or conjures out of thin air). They eventually return home to find Omega has taken up temporary residence in Darke's rooms on the first floor, and that an exhausted Dr. Frost has moved into the entire second floor, bumping poor Torment downstairs to the old servants' quarters.

Dowser suggests to Psypher (who's *still* looking for the keys) to check under the fenders of the Mercedes. He does so, and finds a door key, but no ignition key. Searching the glove box, he finds maps, registration and inspection papers, and numerous pipe cleaners, but no ignition key. He searches the entire car, but still no luck. He does, however, find a completely unused set of golf clubs in the trunk.

Dowser suggests that Psypher simply go *be* Counselor Darke at the Mercedes dealership tomorrow, and Psypher confirms that that is his plan. He also reports that the car alarm is operational but not active, and there seem to be no lurking booby traps on the vehicle.

Dowser gets himself an invite to a voodoo ritual tomorrow night (Saturday). Upon returning to his apartment, he finds that Impulse is not there, so he decides to turn in. She calls him late, around midnight, and invites herself over. In response to his inquiry, she reports that she's not hungry, having had some Egyptian take-out [again: hmmm...] that a tech brought in.

The next morning, Psypher grabs a taxi out to the Mercedes dealership and is there when the doors open at 0900. He explains that he seems to have lost or had his keys stolen, and brandishes the registration in hopes of getting some replacements. But the dealers want to send a truck out to bring the car in for a re-keying (no charge, even). Psypher calls Dowser on the 'link and requests some advice. On a cue from the clairvoyant, Psypher is able to convince the service manager that it would be very embarrassing to the counselor to have such a thing be witnessed by his colleagues, and, promising to bring the car in in a day or two so they can change it, eventually convinces the dealership to issue him a replacement key (which is no small feat in itself).

Dowser calls Psypher briefly over the 'link to confirm that their next aikido lesson is on Monday. Over breakfast, Impulse has been discussing co-habitation with him. She wants to get a place together, and had been looking already when she was seeing Dr. DeVille. She convinces Dowser to go browse places with her later.

Dowser spends the day on the streets, but is unable to garner any further leads.

When Psypher gets out of the cap at PSIOPS and strolls up to the door, Mirage freaks out. The cabbie out of sight, he hastily changes back into Terrance Buchannon, and apologizes. Omega finds the incident in bad taste. When Psypher explains that he was only going out to the Mercedes dealer to get keys to the counselor's car, Omega explains that "We've *got* the keys to the damn thing" back from PSITECH now. From his exasperation, it suddenly dawns on Psypher that perhaps PSI intends that its mastermind be considered to have perished in a tragic and fiery automobile accident, and submits that at least now, Counselor Darke has been seen alive today, *after* the violent incidents of Thursday. Restraining his infuriation, Omega tells him that Dr. Frost signed the death certificate *yesterday*, listing the cause of death as electrocution in a home accident, and ordering the body cremated. Psypher sort of shrugs it off. Omega's reply is cut short by the arrival of Dr. Frost's Sterling.

She's got Mind Slayer in the car with her, and very carefully helps the woozy mother-to-be in and up to her room. She then resumes tackling the paperwork in the office, and Omega leaves to run out to PSITECH.

All the kids from PSIOPS are at school, and Bender seems to be gone as well. Mirage is working away at her terminal. Omega, on the way out, discusses with Psypher that Ego may be in Mexico, but that's all Matrix has been able to get so far. Omega doesn't think it's worth a field op at this time. Psypher leaves a message as to his whereabouts, and hikes back to his flat, stopping to rent a video on the way.

When he gets home, he discovers a message from Mentalla, who sounds rather frazzled. Over a fair amount of background noise (including unintelligible PA announcements), she tells him that something quite unexpected has come up which has caused an emergency revision in her plans, she has to run, and she'll get back to him later. Relieved that he doesn't have to deal with her (for now), he proceeds to "piss away" the rest of the day.

That evening, Dowser goes to his little meeting, a voodoo [although technically, I guess it's probably Santaria] ceremony out in the boonies. Using his mental awareness (and the PSISCANNER) he determines that there seem to be a few psychics present. He confesses to his guide, Jacob, that this really isn't what he had in mind. Jacob indicates to him a less-than-lucid Obeah Woman named Lily. Jacob tells Dowser to look him up tomorrow for an introduction (and subsequent psychometry).

Impulse is on second shift now, rehabilitating Psymon (who hasn't been told about his mother yet).

Sunday morning, Impulse is up at 0900 as usual, and as she's feeling frisky, she and Dowser spend a while frolicking. Afterwards, Dowser gets them some brunch reservations. Psypher takes his video back and rents another.

That afternoon, Dowser looks up Jacob, who takes him to Lily's townhouse. Dowser explains that a "friend" of his has died, and shows her the suicide note. He wants to know if she was forced into writing it. Lily can only tell him that "she felt coerced" when she wrote it. He thanks her, and leaves.

Monday morning, the lads have aikido. Psypher does very well, but Dowser is having a rough time. Psypher informs him that Mind Slayer has been moved "home" to PSIOPS. The PCs go to Dowser's for lunch, and Psypher informs him about Mentalla's call. Dowser sincerely wishes to have as little to do with the woman as possible, even though he admits he should have been following Psypher's involvement with her a little more closely.

Impulse comes home early, and tells them that there seems to have been some sort of "break-in" at PSITECH overnight. The database on the computer was accessed, but there seems to be no physical evidence of forced entry to the facility (no windows broken, no door locks jimmied, and so on). Just some technical files were accessed, and they were simply read, not tampered with.

The PCs head out to PSITECH to try to find the entry route. Only the IR motion sensors in the interior labs were set off, none of the perimeter monitors registered anything. Omega had already interrogated the staff (and Psymon) who were in the facility at the time, but none of them report hearing or seeing anything.

Dowser mindscans citywide for The Enforcer, but has no luck finding her. As Omega and the PSIGUARD have already gone over it all, the PCs decide to leave. Impulse mentions that she is going to a PSIOPS dinner party Omega is cooking for. The PCs, of course invited, decide to attend as well.

Deuce, Torment, Touchstone, Matrix, Mirage, Dr. Frost, Omega, Mind Slayer, and the PCs all convene at the house. Psymon is not yet in attendance, as Dr. Frost has not yet released him from PSITECH.

During the preparations, Psypher 'links to Dowser that it has occurred to him that maybe Psymon got on the computer for reasons yet unknown, and simply mindcontrolled the staff to forget they saw him. The PCs briefly discuss Psymon's ambulatory limitations, the possibility that he could be faking most of the disability, and hypothesize about what he was looking for and whether or not he found it.

Dowser calls Omega with his invisible telepathy to query him about all this, and Omega responds politely enough, but *verbally*. As other folks hanging out in the kitchen begin to notice this one-sided conversation, Dowser suggests they step outside and continue it on the back porch.

Omega thinks they have concocted a plausible hypothesis which *seems* reasonable given Psymon's paranoid nature, but his own theory is that there's a teleporter involved. They disagree as to which explanation is less probable.

While this is going on, a car screeches to a stop out front, and shortly, there's a tremendous pounding on the front door of PSIOPS. Mirage goes to answer it, and those remaining in the kitchen (Bender has taken a woozy Mind Slayer upstairs to her room) hear her surprised exclamation as it is practically torn off the hinges and slammed shut. Dr. Frost is first out of the kitchen, with Psypher right behind. They encounter Notion in the front hallway, who hastily (and apologetically) announces that he came as soon as he heard. Momentarily perplexed as to who told him what, she hastily orders him into "her" office. As they do not close the door, Psypher quietly follows and continues to spectate, informing Dowser about it all.

Out on the porch, Dowser casually asks Omega if he's aware that Angus MacLachlin is in the front office with Dr. Frost. "Bullshit," Omega replies, but barges through the kitchen to see for himself. On the way after him, Dowser notices Matrix and Touchstone talking over the mindlink. He surreptitiously reads Matrix as she 'links to Force the message, "Yes, now". He then pursues Omega up front, past the nearly fainted Mirage.

Meanwhile, Dr. Frost rather directly asks Notion what the hell he's doing here. He replies that he's heard about "Stacey's" rampage, and all the deaths, and has come to help. Dr. Frost wants to know exactly who told him, but after a moment's further consideration, realizes "of course" who would have told him.

At this point a rather concerned Omega bursts in ("Excuse me?"). Notion casually mentions that dinner is burning, and he quietly returns to the kitchen to attend to the food. Notion then informs Karen that L.A. "went badly", and when Psypher asks exactly what that might mean, Dr. Frost mindcontrols him to get out and leave them alone. He decides to eavesdrop from the hallway.

Meanwhile, Dowser has gone upstairs to check on the girls. When Bender asks him what's up, he replies that Notion is downstairs. At this news, Mind Slayer leaps up in a rage, looks out the window, and proceeds to telekinetically flip and crush the Beamer in the front yard. Informed of this over the private 'link, Psypher sticks his head in the office and reports that Mind Slayer is coming, and boy is she upset. "No shit," observes Mirage. (Dr. Frost: "What was *that*?" Notion: "I think it was my car.")

After trashing the car, 'Slayer flies out her bedroom window. Psypher takes time to notice that Touchstone seems to be gone. 'Slayer crashes through the bay window in the office, and Notion greets her with a smooth "Hi, you're looking well Stacey; pregnancy agrees with you," but before she can react, Dr. Frost grabs her with mindcontrol and sits her down in a nice overstuffed chair in the corner. Psypher takes this opportunity to carry his search for Touchstone out into the front yard ("No young men in football helmets flying about?").

Upstairs, Bender practically knocks Dowser over, as she bolts past him and down the two flights to the first floor. She runs into the office, gleefully greets Angus, and embraces with spectacular enthusiasm (and a bit of tongue). Dowser observes that Dr. Frost looks rather annoyed, but Notion is trying to conceal a combination of surprise and contempt. Notion peels her off of him, and gives her a little telepathic message. She pouts momentarily, and then resigns herself to simply clinging to his arm while he does his level best to ignore her.

Over their 'link, Psypher asks Dowser to mindscan the grounds for Touchstone. The psychic is unsuccessful in locating her, even when he expands the search to several blocks' radius. About this time, the networked mindlink with Matrix goes down. She doesn't broadcast any distress, it simply ceases to be. Dowser mindscans around for Matrix, but can't locate her, either. At this point, Impulse, over their 'link, asks Dowser what's wrong with Omega, as he's just puttering around the kitchen, cooking and humming to himself and being generally oblivious to the rest of the world. She also asks Dowser what's wrong with the mindlink to Matrix. Psypher informs him (and he, her) that Touchstone is escaping. Upon being advised of this, Dr. Frost has Notion bring Omega in and release him, whereupon she orders him to put on his battlesuit and go find little Ashton.

Psypher then says to Notion that he "doesn't suppose" *he* would know anything about it. Notion doesn't suppose so either, and continues to attempt to ignore Bender who's still playing with him. Dr. Frost orders the PCs to find Touchstone, and they commandeer the Mercedes for the purpose, but not before searching the girl's room and ascertaining that all of her personal effects (including the jewelry from Uncle Angus) are gone.

Once they're rolling, Dowser mindscans for Force, and discovers him heading eastward out of the city. Consulting a roadmap, he determines the lad to be on I-10, at a modest cruising speed.

Due to the defensive systems of Omega's battlesuit, Dowser reckons he will be unable to psionically locate, and thus inform him. Likewise, he is left with no mechanism to contact Dr. Frost [remember, the cellular is in his Jag]. So he 'links to Impulse, and tells her to inform Dr. Frost that Force is heading east on the interstate. He can't get a clairvoyant lock, but continues to track the kid with mindscanning. In response to his question, Impulse reports that Dr. Frost and Mr. MacLachlin are having a "big argument", which comes as little surprise to Psypher.

Pushing the speed limit slightly, the PCs manage to close a bit. Just as they are noticing this, however, they are ambushed by the disembodied form of Deuce. Psypher does his best to ignore her and keep driving, and Dowser slams up his extra mental defenses, momentarily losing his fix on Force. An NND phaser blast proves ineffective against the lass (despite Dowser's insistence that it theoretically *should* hurt her) and the wild shot also manages to miss Psypher, whose attack is also not capable of *affecting desolid.* A "Mexican Standoff" results, with neither side being able to inflict injury on the other. Even Angela's attempts to faze Psypher fail [Acting!], and she eventually retires to the back seat to sulk and glower at them, poised to pounce should Dowser drop his mental defenses to resume searching for Force.

Checking with Impulse reveals that there is no sign of Torment or Deuce (or Matrix) back at PSIOPS. Psypher is beginning to become amused as the details of what's happened fall together. Replying to Dowser over the mindlink, he inquires as to why exactly the two of them are following the kids ("Maybe they don't need us, but we need them!"). Dowser tries to find Force with mindscan again but fails. He settles for a clairvoyant lock on Deuce, figuring they can drive faster than she can fly, and she's got to sleep before he does. When she returns to her body, they'll have her.

They decide to stop at a Waffle House and get some coffee to go (since, among other things, Psypher can't drive all night simply by sheer force of will). They leave the shadowy form of Angela's spirit to wait in the car. Inside the restaurant, they notice her leaving, flying off into the night. They race back outside, and hop into the car to follow her. She eludes them by flying out over the Gulf beyond the range of Dowser's power. Psypher is amused; Dowser is not. They return to the position at which they last got a fix on Force, but it is to no avail.

Dowser learns from Impulse that Dr. Frost has gone out to PSITECH with Notion and Bender in tow, Omega isn't back yet, and Mind Slayer is "sedated" [a major pharmacological trick on the doctor's part, admittedly] until morning.

The PCs return to PSIOPS to find dinner ruined, to say the least. After some sandwiches slapped together by Mirage, Dowser combs Ashton's room, but can't find a clue as to where she might have gone. Psypher fills up the Mercedes and crashes on the couch, wanting to miss as little of the upcoming fireworks as possible. Dr. Frost comes back with Notion and Omega, with Bender *still* in tow. Dowser (peeved at being shown up by a bunch of kids, and fighting to contain his growing anger and frustration) reports that they lost 'em.

Notion then suggests (with an unsubtle application of psionics practically impossible to miss) to Bender that she go upstairs to her room and turn in for the night. Taking the cue, Dr. Frost then makes a similar suggestion to Omega. At this point, Dr. Frost inquires of the PCs as to the status of the teleport van. They [rather sheepishly] admit that they had hardly considered it, and Dowser twiddles his ring and "poofs" off. It's still in the warehouse (who else can drive it, after all?). Before he even has a chance to examine it, however, Dowser discovers a small pile of teleport rings and a note which reads: "Pschool's out forever — The Renegades" in what is unmistakably Ashton's handwriting. Dowser informs Psypher, who in turn (between giggles) informs Dr. Frost and Notion. She is quite distressed; he is obviously amused. Dr. Frost accuses Notion of conspiring with Touchstone, which he does not deny. He also refuses to divulge Ashton's location, as he has given her his word not to betray her to Dr. Frost, who realizes she probably oughtn't try to force it out of him. She asks why he's helping the girl, and he responds that it's "payback" for "wrecking" his Eurostar project. She complains that it wasn't her fault, but he doesn't want to hear it, as it was her idea to drag the PCs in as a diversion for her own hostile takeover of PSI. He is contemptuous of her overzealous desire to have it all: PSI, the Medina genotype, little Ashton, and anything she can get her hands on.

Meanwhile, over the 'link, Dowser has discovered that the teleporter last sent someone out to PSISCHOOL. Psypher "poofs" off to join him, and together they 'port out there. Once there, they find Soulfire in the kitchen (still in his spiffy red jammies) tied up, and boy is he pissed. (Maybe even more than Dowser is; Psypher, over the private 'link: "I can giggle out loud or I can giggle over the mind link; your choice.") He's been tied up for hours, with airplane cable, which he couldn't burn through (Psypher, tacitly again: "That Touchstone, what a know-it-all!"). He asks if Omega has been informed, and assured that he's right on it, Soulfire has a good stiff drink, and staggers off to bed.

From the kitchen phone, Dowser calls his FBI contact in attempt to persuade him to issue an APB for the TranSport. However, since Dowser wants to make sure it is understood that the vehicle is not wanted in connection with any crime, the Bureau is reluctant to mobilize a search for it. At this point, realizing the call is being traced, and that he's not likely to get any cooperation on this, Dowser hangs up.

They 'port back to PSIOPS and report what's happened at PSISCHOOL. Psypher asks Notion for more information on Mentalla, but Mr. MacLachlin gets rather frosty, and tells

Karen that he's going for a walk. He leaves, alone.

Impulse is gone to PSITECH, to work her shift and attend Psymon. Dowser and Psypher decide to go to Waffle House for another conference. They leave the Mercedes and take Dowser's Jag. Inspecting it for possible ancillary damage from the death of the BMW, Psypher finds only one scratch: the trunk has been pryed open. While Dowser grumbles and fumes tying the trunk lid down, Psypher informs Dr. Frost that Touchstone has a piece of her technology. Dr. Frost, pretty strung-out by now, responds that Touchstone is a piece of her technology.

Sitting silently in their usual booth, the PCs consider leaving. Psypher wants to get into the movies as a stunt double [Oy vey!], claiming "I want to get to get paid to fall out of buildings and be set on fire." Dowser replies that he *is* a walking special effect.

Eventually, they notice how late it's gotten. Psypher goes home, where there are no phone messages for him. Dowser swings by PSITECH, where Impulse is preparing to bring Psymon back to PSIOPS. In answer to her question about what has happened to his trunk, he replies, "Vandals."

Later that morning, as they escort Psymon into the house, and up to the suite he will share with Mind Slayer, they pass the office, where Notion is busily going through the files. Still under medication, Psymon remarks "Oh, I see we got him finally... but, I thought he was dead." Impulse wants breakfast and bed.

Over the meal, Impulse and Dowser discuss further plans. She's got her work, which is very important to her, but she wants to know what about "us"? Dowser replies that he's flexible about what he does (Impulse, with a sly look and her mouth too full to talk: "Yes, I know."), and he aspires to move somewhere far away from PSI, such as Boise, but his work (private investigating and so on) is here in Nawlins. They retire to bed.

The next day, Psypher gets a copy of Variety and hops a streetcar to PSIOPS. Dowser and Impulse go apartment-hunting, and right off they find one they both like. They set up co-habitation, and move furniture and so on.

Observing that the wreckage of the BMW has been removed but the office window still needs repair, Psypher than finds Notion struggling with paperwork in the office, transferring ownership of the farm. ("Hey, after all, I was up.") Psypher apologizes for the Mentalla crack, and Notion responds that he most certainly has it in for Eurostar, for reasons both personal and professional. Psypher asks about what happened the other night, and Notion responds that Ashton is at that rebellious age where she needs to assert her independence, and resented Karen's attempts to control her life. She's fine, and it's probably better off for all concerned that she's on her own for now. Notion asks after Soulfire, and Psypher tells him he's fine, just a bit ego-bruised [no pun intended] and hung-over. Psypher decides he needs to speak with him, so he teleports out to the farm.

Soulfire is stumbling around, and Psypher helps him with coffee. Soulfire complains that he hates living on the farm, and wants a place of his own, now that all the kids are gone. Psypher says he'll set it up for him. They 'port back to PSIOPS.

Soulfire freaks when he catches a glimpse of Notion. Psypher inquires if he was responsible for MacLachlin's death, and Harry tells him no, it was 'Slayer's doing, but that doesn't mean they're pals or anything. Notion invites them in, and asks Harry if he can move off the farm. Soulfire is more than willing to oblige. On the way out, Soulfire asks Psypher if Mind Slayer knows Notion is here, and Psypher tells him "Oh yeah."

Dowser and Impulse drive up, and it comes to pass that Soulfire will move into Dowser's old place. It's about 1500, and Omega has gone off to move back into his old flat. The PCs fix dinner and hang out at PSIOPS, and Impulse heads out to PSITECH. Eventually, Dr. Frost toddles downstairs looking for coffee. Mirage makes her some. Over brunch in the office, she discusses with all assembled that PSI is going to take on the identity of a private, "club-like" organization [or *secret society*, you could say...] resembling its original incarnation, and will be devoted mostly to research, with Notion in charge of the occasional field ops. She suggests that Dowser and Psypher (and Soulfire) continue to work for PSI, undercover in civilian IDs, but "on call" when needed from time to time. After a bit of posturing, the PCs are finally agreeable, as are Soulfire and Mirage. Mirage takes her leave of them to start supper.

As PSI goes semi-legit, low-key research will be conducted at PSITECH (or as it is now to be known, ADVRG). PSI exists not for world domination, as others would have it, but simply to safeguard and protect the interests of mentalists in a world of normals. PSI will now become as apolitical as possible, and avoid ruffling anybody's feathers. Besides, most of the people the FBI were after are now deceased. It is to be expected that opportunities for field ops will still arise, but they will be of a somewhat different nature than PSI is used to. Then she leaves them, to go upstairs.

Dowser learns from Impulse that Dr. Frost, "eugenicist extraordinaire", has "talked" to Mind Slayer's baby *in utero* with her mental powers, but the content of the conversation is not known. In response to Psypher's query as to who Touchstone is, Notion replies that she is Dr. Frost's first genetic experiment. Dowser asks if Touchstone is Motivator, but before the question leaves his lips, Notion grabs Soulfire with mindcontrol or something. Notion admonishes the PCs in no uncertain terms that they are never to speak of "Motivator" again. Literally, they are not even to *think* it. Satisfied that they are clear on this, he then releases Soulfire.

Dowser asks what's going on, and Notion informs him that Dr. Frost is now running PSI. Psypher inquires what Notion's angle is, and MacLachlin confides that he's not sure Dr. Frost is competent to pull it all off; frankly, he thinks she's bitten off more than she can chew. He then summons her with mindscanning.

On Psypher's suggestion, Soulfire is "nudged" off into the kitchen. Dowser asks after the "kids", and Notion assures him that they are quite capable of taking care of themselves (except for the very youngest, who Touchstone plans to get into foster homes as soon as it is feasible). Dr. Frost comes in, and displaces Notion behind the desk. They resume their debate about Ashton.

Notion reiterates that Touchstone is at that awkward, rebellious age, and that, as he sees it, Karen "owed" it to her for the superlative job the girl had done spearheading the infiltration of PSI. He also reminds Karen that " 'Extraordinary circumstances mandate extraordinary measures; extraordinary ability breeds extraordinary ambition.' "

At Notion's prodding, Dr. Frost expresses her sincere gratitude to the PCs for their excellent work in providing a diversion while she moved in. She apologizes for keeping them in the dark, but she couldn't take the chance that minds would be read by the wrong people. She tells them that she wants them to stay on the team. Notion assures them that they can trust her. (Has she ever lied to them? Well, technically *no*, but still...) Psypher asks about Project SHAPE, and she tells him that Psymon can give him the best rundown on the details.

At this point Notion mentions that he has discussed the Motivator thing with them. Karen is upset, but Notion's defense is that he had to. Psypher again expresses his conviction that Dr. Frost is lying to them, and the PCs are once again admonished to never mention Motivator. Dr. Frost launches into her "No one has ever lived long enough to identify, etc." speech, but Notion interrupts her with an accusation that she's being melodramatic. Psypher gets confirmation from Notion that it was Touchstone who raided PSITECH, to get the formula for Torment's medication.

The PCs are still wary of a continuing professional relationship with PSI, Dowser in particular wants to be able to get out of any mindlink with Dr. Frost. She reaches into the desk and produces monoinjectors of Pluto. She gives one to each of the PCs, and explains that although it will do little good in a combat situation, it would always allow them the option of terminating mindlinks (with, of course, the annoying side-effect of being unconscious and having EGO reduced to zero for a while).

Psypher, still unsure, wants to see "Ozzie & Harriet" (i.e. Psymon and 'Slayer). As if on cue, the two of them come down stairs for brunch, as pleasant and cheery and yuppie a couple as you could ever hope to meet. It is at this juncture that Psypher remembers he left Dr. Frost alone in her lab with Psymon's head open just a few days ago.

Finally convinced, the PCs 'link in, and become PSI's first reservists. Psypher magnanimously offers the Mercedes to Notion, but he politely refuses, claiming that he has to go to Europe for some unspecified reason. He tells the PCs that Psymon will be their control, and they'll need to 'link with him as well. He then informs Karen that he's set it up so that the "happy couple" can move out to the farm. She concurs, and authorizes implementation.

Psypher strolls into the kitchen, and over a cup of coffee, gets Psymon to reveal the details of his early career with PSI. Project SHAPE, which stands for Synthetic Humanoid Anthro-Polymorph Experiment, was a venture funded by cronies of Dr. Destroyer in South America a couple of decades ago. Essentially, it was their goal to develop an android, in the original sense of the word: a biological organism in human form, but artificially constructed. In addition, this android would have a flexible physiognomy. The genetic code would respond to internal (or was it external?) control, allowing the entire body to shapeshift. The original use for this android was as a doppleganger for various important personages, one which would be perfect in every physical detail. Unfortunately, none of the prototypes constructed ever displayed the essential viability required to maintain a steady life-state; they lacked a *mind* to provide the necessary drive. The project was eventually shelved, in favor of more cost-effective brainwashing and mindcontrol techniques. Eventually PSI learned of Dr. Henkel's work, and that the final untested prototype had not yet been destroyed, but merely put into storage. Dr. Poe felt that there might be some interesting data pertinent to his own work available in it, and so PSI swiped it for study.

Regarding Psypher, Psymon informs him that he was discovered by a team of PSIGUARD, who noticed that he had a previously-unknown and very powerful psychokinetic ability to "short-out" the neural networks of organisms. He appeared to have been in government service because of this talent (not to mention being found near Langley, Virginia), but he was suffering from some form of artificial, induced memory loss. Unfortunately, due to residual paranoia, the "recruiting" attempt went rather badly, and after Psypher had killed a few of the PSIGUARD, Soulfire (in command of the mission) had stepped in and cooked him to a crisp before he stopped his attacks.

Soulfire looks kind of uncomfortable, and offers an apology at this point, but Psypher understands that he was just doing his job, so there's no bad blood.

Psymon then goes on to explain that the rather toasted target was then brought to PSI, mortally wounded. Acting quickly, Dr. Poe made the fateful decision to try transplanting the target's mind into the body of the SHAPE android. Using devices stolen with the body, the PSITECHs established a mindlink between the two, and then "killed" the charred target, while at the same time shunting his mind into the SHAPE android. Unfortunately the shock of transition ("rebirth", Dr. Poe had christened it) combined with the amnesia already present, left little memory intact in what was soon dubbed the "Psypher". No identification of the body of the presumed government agent was ever forthcoming, and Dr. Poe discouraged any extensive looking to avoid bringing down any further heat from the FBI.

When pressed, Harry can't recall any details of what Psypher looked like, but promises to work on it. It was, after all, 3 or 4 years ago. Soulfire expresses his desire, now that PSI is becoming more of a "secret club" than a criminal organization, to go to L.A. and live the good life.

Bender comes downstairs for some coffee, and upon hearing that Dr. Frost and Notion are in conference, excitedly rushes out of the kitchen to join them. Moments later, the office door slams soundly. Dowser decides to finish his coffee in the office. On the way, he passes a dazed and confused Bender standing in the hallway. Reading her mind, he learns that a huge [54d6 in a combined attack] mindcontrol has instructed her to "get out" of the office. He goes on in, to find Dr. Frost chastising Notion that he "really should try to be nicer" to Bender, who is a sweet girl who really likes him. Notion counters that he has already had his fill of the good doctor's eugenics; "Wasn't Ashton enough for you?"

Dowser asks Notion if Psymon knows about his mother. Notion says he was told yesterday, and Dowser notices that Psymon certainly seems "tame". He then asks Dr. Frost what PSI is up to. She further explains how PSI is going semi-legit, and takes time to congratulate him on shacking up with Impulse, mentioning that she's got a lot of mothering in her. Dowser hastily mentions that he's had a vasectomy, and Dr. Frost resignedly allows that she'll have to tell Impulse to go off the pill. Dowser expresses his desire to deal with matters in his own bed without her help. [Maybe he suspects that the first time he needs an emergency regeneration in the field, he's liable to get back his appendix, his wisdom teeth, and his vas deferens.]

Dowser inquires as to what Dr. Frost has done to Force, and she replies that she simply pushed him in a direction that he was already going. She also again warns him to watch out for Touchstone, as she'll hit puberty soon.

At this point, Psypher remarks that well, the PCs have accomplished their mission after all: Ashton is out of PSI.

Later that evening, as PSI is fully assembled for perhaps the last time. Psymon announces his engagement to Mind Slayer. [So who's going to perform the ceremony, you may well ask...]

FIN

The Great Debate

The Mighty Thew™ Threat Or Menace?

Echieth

A SHORT HISTORY OF ECHIETH

Echieth is an ancient land, home to many races at many times. It is a bountiful land, with great fertile plains; broad navigable rivers; deep, peaceful lakes; vast mountain ranges rich in minerals and timber. Echieth is also the site of *Clara Annung,* the Broken Circle, a site of great power, so strong that it has drawn men from across the boundless oceans, so versatile that these men built entire schools of magic there, so dangerous that when it was set loose uncontrolled, an entire civilization was nearly destroyed.

That civilization is only beginning to recover now, nearly five hundred years after the Great Conflagration that was the Wizard War. Recovering from an age when no sane man would spend a night outside city walls, an age when the monstrosities spawned by the Conflagration roamed throughout Echieth, particularly the inner lands known as Brezenreach. Brezenreach is the region bounded on the east by the Circle Sea, on the north by *Thaaor Iyk Niy*, the Serpents' Mountains, and to the south and east by the greatest monument to the age of the Wizard-Kings—Doran's Wall. The Wall stretches hundreds of miles from the mountains to the sea, five hundred feet tall, covered with a single sheet of impenetrable metal, and pierced only in four places by great fortress-gates. Built to protect the inhabitants of the Wizard Kings' realm from invasion by the southern peoples, it trapped them inside with the aftermath of the Wizard-War.

The cities of Brezenreach developed as those who had managed to escape from the cities on the sea settled at the outposts along the great rivers, and dug themselves in to defend against the Wizardspawn that followed. Greatest among those cities is New Brezen. Located upon an immense bluff above Frackenloch at the confluence of the rivers Fraken and Colling, it is not only defensible against enormous forces, it is truly beautiful. The early inhabitants of the land named Frakenloch *A Esse*, the jewel, claiming it was the fairest sight in the inner lands, which were in turn the fairest lands on the continent.

These early inhabitants, the Yssa, were the first humans to settle in the inner lands, which they called *Se A Ya Yang,* the Land of the Dance. They had been wandering across the continent for generations since being shipwrecked in the northeast, and when they discovered this region they made peace with the Duhoenn, a race of lionlike centaurs who had lived there since the end of the Gods' War, and made it their home. The presence of the Yssa aided the Duhoenn in their ancient rivalry with the Goblin Tribes, and after several small wars, a great goblin alliance was defeated in an immense battle, and the survivors fled into the mountains.

The Yssa and the Duhoenn lived together in peace, following the herds throughout the region, for many generations. The Yssa quickly came to outnumber their neighbors whose population never recovered from the goblin wars. Then the second wave of humans arrived...

From the south they came, from the Great Beyond, small tribal groups like the goblins had been, and though they were always driven off, they forced the Yssa to travel in larger groups and roam less freely than was their wont. These "barbarian incursions" continued for over two hundred years prior to the arrival of the Wizardship.

The Wizards were met at the edge of the Clara Annung by a mighty host of Yssa and Duhoenn, ready to drive off these new invaders. For days, the Wizards were besieged in their encampment, their leader Brezen trying desperately to convince the natives of their peaceful intentions. Finally another one of them, Fraken, won over the matriarch of the Yssa by presenting her with a gift of his own making: The Deck. With this act the two groups became friends, and the Age of Wizards began.

On the site of the Wizards' original encampment grew the first city, Brezen, populated by those among the Yssa who gave up their wanderings to provide support for the Wizards' work, and later by the subsequent waves of settlers from the Wizards' homeland. Eventually, later generations of Wizards withdrew to the island in the Circle Sea and founded an exclusive enclave. As the Wizards grew more powerful, the cities on the sea (a second, Bingham had since developed) grew more prosperous, and those Yssa who maintained their traditional ways dwindled along with the Duhoenn. The religion of the Yssa and Duhoenn evolved substantially during this period; the gods of stability and order, most notably Roth (god of the earth) and Mor (god of the waters). Ora, goddess of the air, is said to have been died during this era.

The "barbarian incursions" had been continuing all through this period, but only when many tribes were united under a brilliant leader Veltyana, did they become a threat to to the area which had become known as Brezenreach. The leader of the Wizards, Doran, led the defence against Veltyana's horde, finally defeating her. Doran was so distraught by the toll this war had taken that he called upon all the power of the Wizards, and raised the Wall, so that his lands could never again be threatened. And they were indeed now his lands, for during the defence against Veltyana, the peoples of Brezenreach had made him their king.

King Doran moved to Brezen and built a palace there, but most Wizardwork was still relegated to Oaoie, the City of Wizards. Kingship and Wizardry mixed well in Doran's during his reign, but with his death, a fierce power struggle arose between his son, Koen, and his brother, Sqas, that became known as the Wizardwar, and resulted in the Conflagration and the exodus of the peoples of the cities into the inner lands.

New, smaller cities quickly rose from former trading settlements. Walls were raised to keep out the creatures which followed. Some of these creatures had once been friends of those in the cities, now they were monstrosities. Gradually the monstrosities died off, but the patterns of life formed while they roamed became ingrained upon the city dwellers. Protected from the Wizardwar's victims by city walls, and from invaders by Doran's Wall, people remained confined to their cities for nearly four centuries. The invasions from the sea by the northern tribes of Ailif and Würl until convinced their leaders that outlying settlements were necessary for defensive purposes, and the overnight depopulation of the cities of Woodbury and Rothlorn convinced the people that city walls could trap people in as well as keep enemies out. Within a century over a hundred smaller towns and villages had arisen along the rivers and trade routes of Brezenreach, owing varying levels of fealty to their sponsoring cities.

In the wake of the invasions by Ailif and Würl, the Council of Seven (which had been founded in Brezen as a court of arbitration, and later became the major force in maintaining peace as the new cities developed different, and often conflicting forms of government), declared Shaun Rey Grantson, a descendant of Doran, the High King of Brezenreach. Grantson was acknowledged by the rulers of the inner cities, and raised an army to drive out the men from the north. The force marched north from New Brezen to Collingsford, where they received reports of strange doings on Rothlorn. Thinking that their enemies may had bypassed Bochen and Triad, the army went on to Rothlorn, only to find that every living being and creature had disappeared, apparently all at once. Before the force could move on to the west, the High King was struck down by unknown magics, and cast into a deep sleep. Grantson was entombed in the ruins of his grandfather Mas' keep north of Collingsford, and the army went on to fight a series of bloody but inconclusive campaigns against the intruders.

A succession crisis arose among two of Shaun Rey Grantson's sons (twins by the Queen of New Brezen), and eventually they both went into self-imposed exile, allowing another branch of their mother's family to rule the city of New Brezen. There was no second High King. Neither relinquished their claim, however. Prince Thernd went to Bochen, and Prince Thessad went to Grantwood. There were at least two other known children of the High King, Lennanrhe and Carlon, and rumors of others.

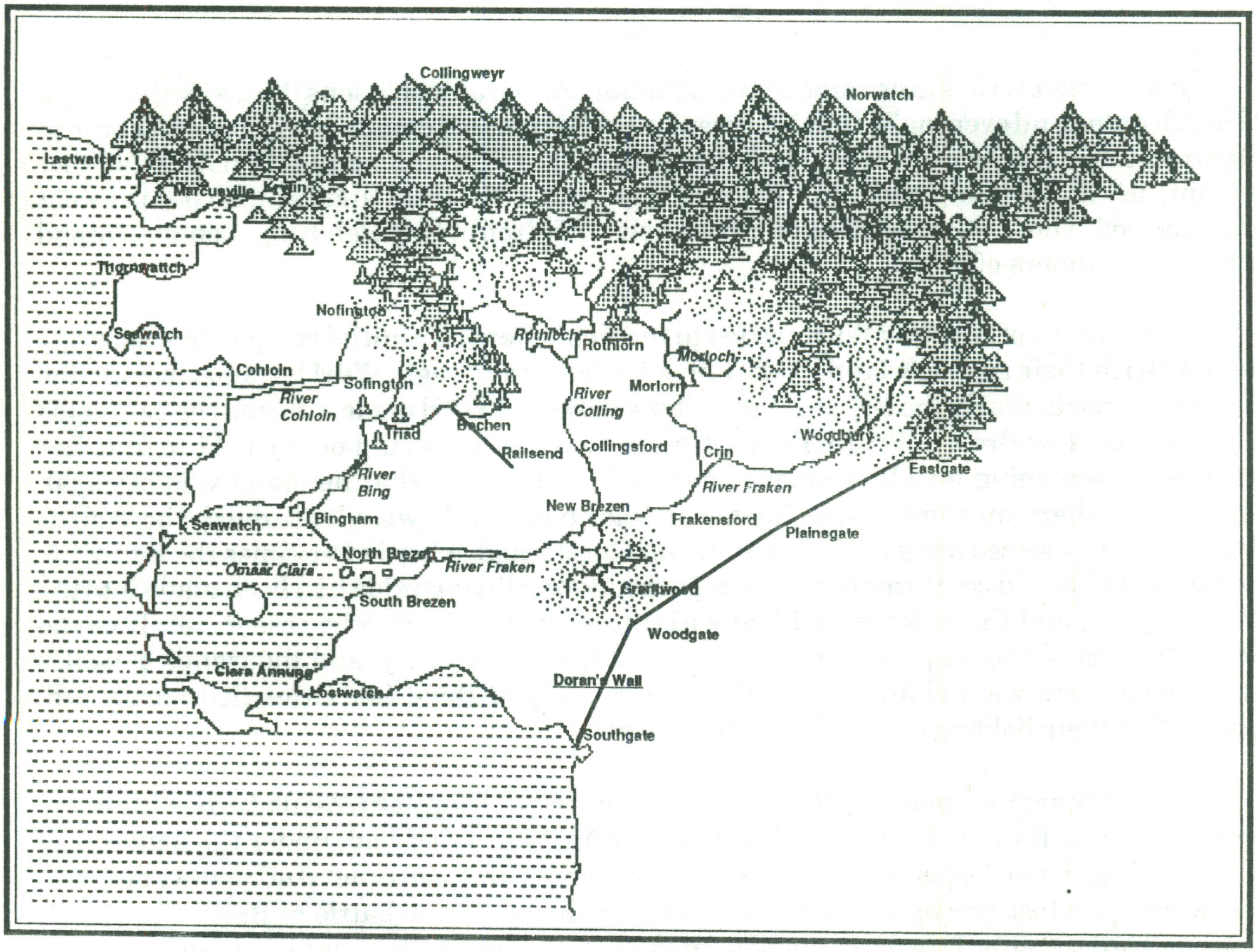
The nations of Ailif and Würl settled in the west after their initial conquests, seemingly satisfied with their rich new lands. After about a century though, Würl began attacking the inner lands, particularly the city of Triad. After warriors of Würl made a daring series of raids in the area of New Brezen, Prince Feran, fearing that his city would be the next to fall after Triad, went searching for allies among the southern tribes. What he found was betrayal. When his southern mercenaries, led by a man known as Ariuk, were let through the Wall at Plainsgate, they seized the gate from within, and let through a horde five times the size of the one Veltyana had led centuries before. For generations, slaving raids had been made into the Great Beyond, and the cities were filled with those slaves, slaves who rose in revolt as the mighty legions of Ariuk approached. Frakensford fell immediately, and thousands of nobles and slave-owners were slain. The nobles and wealthy of the other cities fled northward, abandoning their holdings to the oncoming invaders.

After taking Frakensford, New Brezen, Crin, and Collingsford, Ariuk turned his forces toward Bochen. Bochen, however, being the closest city to Triad had, under the guidance of Prince Thernd, been desperately building up its defences for some time. And mighty defences they were...greatest among these was the steam ballista. At the battle of Railsend, Ariuk's legions were decimated by a much smaller force from Bochen, and he was force to sue for peace.

After twenty years, the nobles are still holed up in their mountain retreats; Bochen is prospering, safe behind its awesome defences; the peoples of Würl are settling into their new lands around Triad, the Grand Alliance of Ariuk controls most of the inner lands, and in the former city of Woodbury, goblins now reside, apparently having learned much by watching the Yssa and their successors. A city is growing at Railsend, an open city where the folk of Ariuk, the Exiles, and the Bochenites can meet and trade.

The churches of Roth and Mor have suffered greatly as a result of the invasions, Triad was the holy city of Roth, and Crin was the holy city of Mor; both were thoroughly sacked, and most of their sacred relics were lost. The high priests of Both gods joined the nobility in exile at Rothlorn, though lesser priests remain in the cities to tend to their followers. Those followers have been dwindling, though, many have converted to new religions, and others have decided that the gods have abandoned Brezenreach.

Now new rumors are beginning to be heard... Tales of walking dead being met on the road; massacres of entire households in the north; goblins travelling in the realms of Man; fearsome monsters migrating north from the Old Cities; ancient races, thought long-extinct, hunting the plains again; wondrous new creatures appearing in the marketplace of Railsend... The priests of the old gods predict divine retribution against the invaders is imminent, while the priests and shamen of the Ariuk Alliance claim that their gods and spirits are now dominating Brezenreach, and these strange happenings are side-effects of the fundamental changes happening in the Godrealms.


Collingweyr
Norwatch
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Marcusville
Krytin
Thornwatch
Nofington
Seawatch
Rothloch
Rothlorn
Morloch
Cohloin
Sofington
River Cohloin
River Colling
Morlorn
Triad
Bochen
Railsend
Collingsford
Crin
Woodbury
Eastgate
River Bing
River Fraken
New Brezen
Frakensford
Plainsgate
Seawatch
Bingham
North Brezen
Omaar Clara
River Fraken
Grimwood
South Brezen
Woodgate
Clara Annung
Doran's Wall
Lostwatch
Southgate

Aense

A metal of great magical properties found throughout the Circle Sea. Aense is so stable that only magical means can be used to shape it, and the resulting shape is unalterable by any other means. It was used during the Age of Wizards in the construction of many wondrous artifacts, most dramatic of which is Doran's Wall. During the time of the High King, a small number of coins (1,000) made of Aense were introduced into circulation by the Guild of the coin. These coins, called Rings, worth 100 marks each, were used to pay the mercenary army raised by Shaun Rey Grantson, one to each soldier. Very few of these coins remain in circulation today.

Age of Wizards

The historical period from the landing of the Wizardship Aoae in Echieth, to the Conflagration which ended the Wizardwar. During these three centuries, the first cities were built in Brezenreach, the Yssa interbred with the Wizardfolk and became more settled, and the Duhoenn dwindled.

Ailif

One of the northern clans who invaded from the sea in the year 709 AW. At that time they conquered the region around Lake Krytin, including the towns of Krytin and Marcusville. Far less aggressive than their kinfolk of Würl, they are seemingly content with their holdings, and have even established some trade with Bochen. They are probably descended from the raiders who caused the Wizards to build the Watches.

Aoae

See Wizardship

Ariuk

(1) An alliance of clans from the Great Beyond who invaded and conquered much of Brezenreach in 796 AW. (2) The leader of the Grand Alliance of Ariuk, who was apparently responsible for the forging of the Alliance, claims descent from Shaun Rey Grantson by way of Carlon. Ariuk is generally acknowledged to be the grand strategist of the invasion, and is unquestionably recognized as a brilliant tactician as well as a warrior of great personal prowess. (3) The common language of the clans of Ariuk, thought to have been developed by the man known as Ariuk. (4) In the language Ariuk, a word meaning "All of us".

Bing

(1) A member of the crew of the Wizardship, who distinguished himself as an explorer, rather that as a Wizard. (2) A river system extending from the Bochen Ridge of the Serpent's Mountains to the Circle Sea.

Bingham

A city built near the mouth of the River Bing on the Circle Sea. It was a major port for timber and ores brought downriver and shipped to Oaoie. The city was destroyed in the Conflagration, and its survivors fled upriver to Triad and Bochen.

Bochen

A minor outpost during the Age of Wizards used as a collection and shipping center for the miners and lumberers in the Serpent's Mountains. After the Conflagration and the closing of the Circle Sea, it became a staging point for caravans to and from Collingsford, and hence the Inner Lands. The Council of Seven made their headquarters there in 633 AW after a falling out with the prince of New Brezen. With the coming of the Council, Bochen became the center for progressivism, and a haven for outcasts of the more conservative cities. In the wake of the Year of Invasions, Bochen has emerged as the most powerful city in Brezenreach, though its mercenary force is small, it is extremely well-equipped with weapons unavailable to its enemies. Ruled by the Lord Mayor, who is chosen by the Electorate, which is in turn made up of those certified by the Guild of the Coin as the hundred wealthiest citizens of Bochen.

Brezen

(1) The captain of the Wizardship and first leader of the Wizards. (2) The first great city of Brezenreach, built along the north and south banks of the mouth of the River Fraken on the Circle Sea. It was settled by Wizardfolk, Yssa, and some of the less aggressive folk from the Great Beyond, as well as innumerable slaves captured from other tribes. At the time of the Wizardwar, its population was approximately 500,000, of whom less than half survived to make the Exodus upriver. Brezen was originally ruled by a Council of Elders which evolved into a nobility based upon wealth and descent from the crew of the Wizardship. When Doran was declared King, he appointed a Council of Regents to administrate the city. During the latter part of Doran's reign, as his own interests and obsessions dominated his time, the nobility came to control the Council of Regents, and during Koen's brief reign, the Council established virtual rulership of the city.

Brezenreach

The region of Echieth dominated by the culture of the Wizardfolk. Bounded on the east by the Circle Sea, on the north by the Serpents' Mountains, and to the south and east by Doran's Wall. Brezenreach is considered to be the richest and most desirable portion of Echieth, and has been fought over by various races and peoples for over a thousand years. Its population in 700 AW was approximately one million people. A more recent figure, since the invasions of Ailif, Würl and Ariuk, and the devastation of the cities of Rothlorn and Woodbury is unclear, but is probably about three-quarters of a million.

Brog

The last great leader of the Goblins in the wars with the Duhoenn. Captured and executed by Yulorf the Great.

Broken Circle

An order of knights established by the Council of Seven to act as their agents at large. The Knights of the Broken Circle were recruited mostly from the second sons of the nobility of Brezenreach, and acted as judges, as well as serving any other tasks assigned then by the Council. *see also Clara Annung*

Carlon

Son of Shaun Rey Grantson and Tiorre of the Yssa, disappeared immediately after his birth, from which he reportedly emerged fully grown. Aruik claims to be his son.

Clara Annung

The Broken Circle, a mountainous ridge which forms an almost perfect circle in the southwest of Brezenreach. It is made up of four islands and a portion of the mainland which is broken by two rivers. It is this circle which is said to have drawn the Wizards, and upon which the initial civilization of Brezenreach developed.

Circle Sea

see Omaar Clara

Cohloin

(1) A member of the crew of the Wizardship. (2) A city on the Serpent Sea at the mouth of the River Cohloin, which developed

during the Age of Wizards as a shipping center for meat and grains raised upriver. Cohloin survived the Conflagration unscathed, but lost the basis for its economy with the closing of the Circle Sea, and its accompanying near-isolation from the inner lands. It did not grow much after the Wizardwar, and fell quickly to the invasion of Würl. (3) A river flowing from the southern Thorn Ridge to the Serpent Sea, feeding rich agricultural and pasture lands, at one point the primary source of food for the cities on the Circle Sea.

Colling

(1) A member of the Wizardship crew who explored and mapped much of the inner lands. He disappeared on a quest to reach the mountain which now bears his name. (2) A river which flows between Rothloch and Frachenloch.

Collingsford

A city on the River Colling between New Brezen and Rothlorn. Collingsford has been an important link in the economy of Brezenreach ever since the Wizardwar. It was the jumping-off point for caravans from the Inner Lands to the west, and is now the closest Ariuk-occupied city to Railsend. Before the conquest, Collingsford was ruled by a mayor, who was elected by the guilds. It is now governed by Kail of the Fann clan.

Collingweyr

The tallest peak in the Serpent's Mountains. Rumors persist of a lost city founded there by Colling and the members of his expedition.

Conflagration

At the climax of the Wizardwar, the great battery of magical energy created and used by the Wizards of Oaoie, was destroyed, releasing a wave of destruction that swept the lands of the Broken Circle. Many of those people and creatures who survived the Conflagration were transformed into horrific monstrosities which preyed upon the other survivors.

Corin

One of three swords made by Doran near the end of his life. Referred to as the Sword of Power, it was hidden away and never seen, until it was found by Halivern, one of the companions of Shaun Rey Grantson. Halivern returned with Corin just after the High King's enchantment, and rather than accompany Ntedjus and the High King's army to the Westwars, he fled with the sword.

Council of All Guilds

A body of representatives of all guilds operating in a city. The Council of All Guilds acts to settle disputes amongst themselves, as well as to protect their common interests. The governments of most cities look to the Council for advice and approval, and in some cases (most notably Collingsford before Ariuk's invasion), the Council of All Guilds is the government. Each individual guild's Grandmaster is a member of the Council, and they elect a Master of All Guilds, who speaks for the Council. There is also a Council of All Guilds for all Brezenreach, made up of the Ranking Grandmasters of each guild in the land, but it has not met since the conquest.

Council of Seven

A body formed early in the history of Brezen as a court of arbitration, which was often the major opponent of the Council of Regents over issues concerning the rule of the city. After the Wizardwar, the Council of Seven became the major force in handling disputes between the cities, and in maintaining communications and trade between them. The members of the Council of Seven were anonymous, but it was generally believed that among their number were the Master of All Guilds, and the High Priests of Mor and Roth. The Council of Seven was closely allied with the guilds, and continued its role as the opponent of the nobility. The last great acts of the Council of Seven were the creation of the High King, and the truce with Ailif and Würl. Since the conquest of Brezenreach by Ariuk, the Council has not met, apparently because of the loss of a majority of its members.

Crin

(1) A member of the crew of Aoae. (2) A city at the confluence of the rivers Crin and Fraken, site of the High Temple of Mor. Crin was ruled by a duke, and administered largely by acolytes of Mor. Crin was conquered by Ariuk in late 796, and is now governed by Almer of the Kallif clan. (3) A river flowing from the mountains below Norwatch to the river Fraken.

Deck, The

A set of 49 cards created by Fraken as a peace-gift to the Yssa. Hundreds of copies have been made of it, and all continue to hold the prophetic and insightful powers of the original. The images inscribed on the cards reveal much about Echieth, past, present, and allegedly future.

Denungrot

According to Yssa legend, the oldest of Echieth's gods, creator of Mas, Roth, Ora, Szlakarken, Prolan, and Wrode. Denungrot and his children fought a long and horrible war with the Iyk Niy across the length and breadth of Echieth, which ended only when his creations turned against him and bound him under the ground at the spot now known as Triad. Little is known of Denungrot's nature, save that Szlakarken was his first and favorite son.

Doran

The first of the Wizard-Kings, and generally acknowledged as the greatest Wizard in the history of Echieth. Doran was the youngest son of Eorcen, and emerged as the leader of the Wizards of Oaoie after a power struggle between his older brothers Mas and Sqas, and his uncle Koster, following his father's death. In 178 AW, Doran raised Eaea into the sky above Oaoie to serve as his private sanctum, this was at the time the greatest act of Wizadry ever performed. Doran topped that act thirty-six years later when he raised Ecliga from the ground, and coated its entire surface with Aense. In 277, Doran's wife died after the demon Szlakarken tried to possess their unborn baby, the child, Koen, survived, and Doran swore to destroy Szlakarken. Until Koen reached adulthood, Doran waited, and planned his revenge. During this time he created many smaller artifacts, and distributed them among his friends and allies. On landing day, in the year 300, Doran journeyed to Essuth to face down Szlakarken, one month later, a small volcano erupted in the mouth of the Rover Brezen, and spewed forth Doran's broken body. When the volcano cooled, a tomb was made on the newly-formed island, and it was called Kingsgrave.

Doran's Wall (Ecliga)

A massive barrier raised from the ground in 214 by the Wizard-King Doran. The Wall stretches hundreds of miles from the mountains to the sea, five hundred feet tall, covered with a single sheet of impenetrable metal, and pierced only in four places by great fortress-gates. Built to protect the inhabitants of the Wizard Kings' realm from invasion by the southern peoples, it trapped them inside with the aftermath of the Wizardwar.

Duhoenn

A race of lionlike centaurs who were the earliest known inhabitants of Brezenreach. The Duhoenn fought a series of wars with the Goblins over the lands, and were eventually aided by the Yssa. For a time, they and the Yssa lived together, but with the coming of the Wizards, and the rise of cities, and especially after the raising of Doran's Wall disrupted the herds, the Duhoenn began to die out, in the time of the High King there were believed to be but a few hundred left, today it is uncertain if any survive.

Eaea (the Star)

The second brightest object in the nighttime sky, often visible in the daytime as well, Eaea never moves, always holding position miles above the exact center of the Circle Sea. Doran built Eaea during the early part of his span as chief of the Wizards, and raised it into the sky in the year 178. The secret method he used to gain access to it died with him. Legend has it that many wondrous magical devices lie undisturbed inside Eaea, waiting to be recovered.

Eaoakin

A race of birdmen who once lived in the crags of the Serpents' Mountains, and hunted the plains of Brezenreach. Tales survive among the Yssa of individuals of this race aiding stricken travellers, and occasionally befriending Yssa and Duhoenn, but the race is thought to have died along with their goddess, Ora, soon after the Wizardship's arrival.

Ecliga

see Doran's Wall

Enla

The matriarch (Yusye) of the Yssa at the time of the Wizardship's arrival. Enla gathered a mighty force of Yssa and Duhoenn and surrounded the grounded ship, and threatened to destroy the newcomers. After many days of fruitless attempt at bargaining by Brezen, another of Aoae's crew, Fraken, emerged with a gift for Enla, the Deck. Enla was so pleased with the Deck, that she welcomed the Wizards, and soon married Fraken.

Entanna

A cousin of Queen Norr who was chosen as Queen when the succession dispute between Prince Thernd and Prince Thessad proved irreconcilable. Entanna married Feran, the chief of New Brezen's Constabulary, and a long-time rival of Shaun Rey Grantson. They had two children, Feran, and Elen. Entanna and Feran were driven mad by immortality, and were succeeded by their son. Both were captured during the fall of New Brezen, and impaled on either side of the city gates.

Eorcen

The Wizard who unlocked the secret of immortality. Eorcen was also the father of Doran, Mas and Sqas, and a descendant of Colling. Eorcen's discovery led to his pre-eminence among the Wizards of Oaoie, and under his leadership, a great battery of magical energy was created. All the Wizards would donate their personal energies to this battery on a regular basis, and after several years the power available from it enabled the working of enchantments previously unthinkable. Eorcen is said to have died by drawing too much of this energy into himself. His death led to a fierce struggle between his brother and sons, for his position as Archmage, and the accompanying control of the battery. Doran, who eventually won, later used these energies to accomplish his greatest acts of wizardry, Eaea and Ecliga.

Essuth

The realm of the dead. Essuth lies somewhere near Echieth, some say under the Serpents' Mountains, some say under the Circle Sea, some say behind the Sun. It is ruled by the demon Szlakarken, who, legend has it, stole it from his sister Wrode when he killed her. The priests of Roth and Mor claim that Essuth was once a paradise until Szlakarken tore it asunder, and allowed his demonlings to live there. They also say that a small part of Wrode's Essuth remains, and those most blessed by the gods will find there way there after they leave Echieth.

Essuthin

All those who have ceased to live. The Yssa claim that during the Gods' War, Wrode led an army of the dead against the Iyk Niy. The Duhoenn told them that Szlakarken, who stole Essuth from his sister, has no control over the Essuthin, and can only torment them, not command them.

Feran

(1) The Constable of New Brezen under King Norrin, Duke Oncen, Queen Norr, and Queen Entanna; Husband of Entanna, and

Regent of New Brezen after her enfeeblement, Father of Feran and Elen: Grandfather of Yulorf Airrea. Feran was an ally of Duke Oncen, and a long-standing rival of Shaun Rey Grantson, whose participation in the plots against Norrin and Norr was never proven. He banished Grantson from New Brezen, and opposed his creation as High King, but was swayed by his wife (as well as the threat of a boycott by the Guilds). He went mad twenty years after his wife, and was slain by Ariuk after the fall of New Brezen. (2) The last reigning King of New Brezen. In 796, after a daring raid by young warriors of Würl, he became convinced that after Triad fell, New Brezen would be next. Fearing that his defences were inadequate, he sent an envoy to seek an alliance with Ariuk. This operation ended in disaster, when Ariuk used this as an opportunity to capture Plainsgate, and bring through his legions. Feran escaped to Rothlorn, leaving his parents to die in his place. He has seven daughters, and no sons, yet refuses to acknowledge his nephew Yulorf as his heir, claiming he will live to reclaim his throne and sire many sons of his own. (This is quite unlikely, since the Mercenaries Guild has blacklisted him, thus preventing him from maintaining a household guard, let alone raising an army.)

Fraken

One of the crew of the Wizardship, and the creator of the Deck. Feran married Enla, matriarch of the Yssa, and abandoned Wizadry to live with her and her people. He made dozens of additional copies of the Deck during his life, some of which still survive. All the remaining Yssa trace their ancestry to Feran and Enla.

Frakenloch (A Esse)

An enormous, deep, clear lake below the confluence of the rivers Fraken and Colling. Frakenloch is surrounded on three sides by high palisades, and on the third by the swamps of Grantwood. The folk of the inner lands claim that its waters are so pure that the monstrosities created by the Conflagration could not survive in it, and therefore could not swim any farther upriver. For centuries after the Wizardwar, nobody would venture beyond Grant's Bluff at its southern end, considering it the border between the safe lands and the tainted.

Frakensford

A small city between Crin and New Brezen. Frakensford was a major crossing in the migrations of the herds before the raising of Doran's Wall. Many people settled there after the Conflagration, but it did not develop as a major part of Brezenreach's economy. Two famous battles were fought at Frakensford; the First Battle of Frakensford, in the year 195, saw Doran's costly defeat of Veltyanna's horde, and at the Second Battle of Frakensford, in 796, Ariuk proved that the forces of the Inner Lands were no match for his legions. Word of the ferocity of this battle led several of the other cities to surrender immediately.

Goblin

A race of manlike creatures who live on the fringes of Brezenreach. Goblins are smaller and wirier than Men, with proportionally longer arms, and shorter legs; heavier jawbones and sharper teeth; smaller foreheads and larger eyes. They are capable of great intelligence, though they tend toward a feral lifestyle. In ancient days, the goblins, or Ngatnii as they call themselves, were more organized, and waged a series of wars with the Duhoenn over the Inner Lands. Since the defeat of Brog by the Yssa, they have lived mostly in the Serpent's Mountains, and only rarely ventured in small groups into Man's world. After the scourging of Woodbury in 707 AW, a group of goblins, led by one called Chyspyd, claimed the abandoned city, and took up residence there. *See also Tnii.*

Grant

The son of Mas, the Bodyguard of Doran, and the Hero of the Exodus. Grant was the youngest son of a prominent noble family of Brezen, who distinguished himself as a warrior at the First Battle of Frakensford, and was chosen as Doran's Bodyguard. The two became friends, and soon before his death, Doran presented him with one of the Kyagen, Tomen. (It was not until centuries later, when the Council of Seven named Shaun Rey Grantson as High King, that Mas admitted to being Grant's real father.) When the Wizardwar erupted, Grant led the surviving populace of Brezen upriver, and led a pursuing horde on a wild chase across the Cornac Plains, giving his charges enough time to escape beyond Frakenloch. It was said that he died leading this horde off of the great bluff which now bears his name, and into the Waters of Frakenloch, but over 350 years later, he showed up in Morloch long enough to sire Shaun Rey, and several times thereafter to provide indirect aid for his son.

Great Beyond

All the lands outside Brezenreach, especially the great plains to the south and east of Doran's Wall. The exact size of the Great Beyond is unknown, but the number and diversity of the members of the Alliance of Ariuk indicate that it it is vast indeed. People of a dozen different shades came with Ariuk, and brought hundreds of species of animals never before seen in Brezenreach, everything from multi-colored talking birds, to herdbeasts with necks longer than a man is tall, to giant lizardthings which seem as if they might be the young of dragons. More strange lands lie to the north, home of the folk of Ailif and Würl; and somewhere are the places from whence the Wizards and the Yssa came.

Guild of the Coin

An association dedicated to maintaining trade, and measuring value. The most powerful of the Guilds, considered to be the linchpin of the entire guild structure. The official purpose of the Guild is the making, changing, and storage of coinage. The Guild provides a common set of values against which all goods and services can be measured. In practice, the Guild's power extends much farther, dominating the Councils of All Guilds, and the Council of Seven. When Shaun Rey Grantson was made High King, the Guild introduced a new coin, the Ring, and provided them to him to pay his army. Although the Council of Seven has disappeared since Ariuk's conquest, the Guild of the Coin continues as before, and in fact, did much to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Halivern

One of the companions of Shaun Rey Grantson, and later of Veltyana. Halivern was the balladeer for Prince Norrin's bodyguard, and went into exile with them after the Prince's murder, taking the shame-name of Half. After Shaun Rey Grantson met the exiles, and convinced them to return to New Brezen with him to save Princess Norr, Half became Grantson's closest friend. Shaun's curse eventually drove Half off, and he travelled with Veltyana for a time. When Shaun Rey became High King, Halivern went off in quest of the lost sword Corin, returning with it too late to prevent Grantson's bewitching. He and the sword then disappeared, and were not seen again, although rumor has it that he arrived in Bochen with a small company of Goblins, just prior to the fall of Triad and Ariuk's invasion of Brezenreach.

Iyk Niy

The ancient and powerful dragons who sleep in the mountains of Echieth. Little is known of the Iyk Niy, the Duhoenn claim that they fought a million-year war with the gods over Echieth — and won. Now they sleep, perhaps resting after their long struggle. The lesser dragons who occasionally roam and ravage (such as the pair who devoured the entire population of Woodbury in 707), are said to be their offspring.

Kingsrest

A shrine built upon the ruins of Mas' tower, where lies the enchanted High King of Brezenreach, Shaun Rey Grantson. After Veltyana's maiming of Mas, his tower collapsed, and a powerful geyser erupted from the site. These waters were determined to provide healing to those who bathed in them, rapid growth to plant life nourished with them, and immortality (and generally madness) to those who drank them. When Shaun Rey Grantson's last wife, Tiorre, was trapped between life and death after the birth of their son, Carlon, he built a small palace for her there, covering the geyser in the process and pooling its waters, hoping they would one day revive her. When he was struck down by unknown magics, his most loyal followers took him there, and laid him to rest beside Tiorre, surrounded by all the trophies he had collected in his short, cursed life.

Koen

The second, and last, of the Wizardkings. Koen was involved in otherworldly struggles even before his birth, and spent his entire life preparing for another series of battles he was doomed to lose. As an unborn baby, Koen was possessed by the demon Szlakarken, who apparently hoped to access the powers of Oaoie through him. Koen survived this attempt, but his mother did not. His father, Doran, brought him up knowing that his succession would be challenged, and tried to provide him with weapons and allies to meet those challenges. When Doran died, however, no challenges were forthcoming, and after a few years of diligence, Koen decided that his worries were groundless, and relaxed. Then Sqas struck, and struck hard. Koen was pursued all the way to the heart of Oaoie, and in a last-ditch effort tried to use the power of the great battery as a point-blank weapon. The result was the Conflagration: Koen was destroyed, Sqas was killed, and the Age of Wizards came to an end.

Koster

The first "evil" Wizard. Koster was the brother of Eorcen, and claimed the right to succeed him as Archmage, but was contested by his nephews Mas and Sqas. The Conclave of Wizards chose Eorcen's youngest son, Doran, over all of them. Koster left Oaoie and occupied a fortress in the Bing river delta. For years he brooded over his defeat, and eventually was convinced by Szlakarken to join forces. Koster became the high priest of Szlakarken, and brought many of the people of Brezen and Bing into the cult. The cult was purged from the cities by the churches of Mas and Sqas, with the aid of Doran, who bound Koster in his keep. Whether the keep still stands after the Conflagration is unknown, as is whether Koster remains bound inside.

Kyagen

Three magical swords created by Doran. Toward the end of his reign, while preparing for his doomed attack upon Szlakarken, Doran created many magical artifacts for his friends and allies. Foremost among these were the Kyagen: Tomen, the Sword of Sharpness, Toliem, the Sword of Swiftness, and Corin, the Sword of Power. Doran said that the one who could wield the Kyagen all at once, could reorder the world to their own purposes.

Lennanrhe

The daughter of Shaun Rey Grantson and Veltyana, and the founder of an underground society of healers. Soon after her birth, Lennanrhe (then called Venrelle) was placed under the care of the Duhoenn. The name they gave means "Promise" in their language. Lennanrhe spent a year with her father prior to his becoming High King, and then disappeared until her late teens. She then began visiting small villages, often in the company of a young Duhoenn buck, and teaching the women healing arts. As her teachings spread, the Physicians' Guild attempted to stop her from infringing upon their business, but Lennanrhe prevailed, convincing the Council of Seven that her methods and practices were completely different than those of the Guild. Her students, and their own students, have been so successful, that members of the Physicians' Guild have left many villages and towns due to lack of work, and new Guild apprenticeships have become almost non-existent. Lennanrhe, whose beauty is said to surpass even her mother's, and rival that of Tiorre, has no known home, and is often not reported seen for years at a time.

Lost Isles

The four islands on the west side of the Circle Sea. Before the Wizardwar, these islands were known as places of incredible forbidden beauty, having been declared off-limits to all Men, as part of an agreement with the Voön, to whom they were sacred. How they weathered the Conflagration is unknown.

Mas

The last of the Wizards of old. Mas contested with his brother and uncle over the position of Archmage following Eorcen's death, and left Oaoie when Doran was elected. He took up residence in a tower north of Collingsford, and was rarely seen until the Wizardwar, when he rushed to Brezen to help with the Exodus, after which he again retired to his tower. It was later revealed that during the next few centuries he travelled under many names, often making himself out as a petty dabbler or hedgemage. He became a fierce opponent, and later a staunch ally of his grandson Shaun Rey, and eventually helped swing the vote of the Council of Seven in favor of making the young man High King. His tower was destroyed in 702, and he resigned from the Council and left Brezenreach after failing to revive his grandson from the enchantments binding him.

Master of All Guilds

see Council of All Guilds

Mercenaries Guild

One of the oldest and most respected guilds of Brezenreach. Nearly all professional men (and now women) under arms in Brezenreach before the invasions were members of the Mercenaries Guild. The Guild acts as a brokerage for positions from personal bodyguards to city guardsmen, generally fitting the individual mercenary to the job. Traditionally, the Guild has stayed removed from politics, and tried to avoid conflicting contracts which might cause its members to be obligated to fight each other. The dominance of the Guild was one of the major factors in the generally peaceful relations between cities during the post-Wizardwar period: Mercenaries charge much less for defensive contracts than for offensive jobs.

Mor

The god of the Waters (and commerce). Mor was one of Denungrot's children, and fought at his side during the Gods' War against the Iyk Niy. The Voön were his followers during this time, but he later abandoned them, as his interest in the Wizards and their cities grew. As Roth's popularity grew with landholders and the city-bound folk, Mor's grew with the merchants and sailors. The priests of Mor became especially influential among the guilds, and as time passed, great rivalry arose between these priests, and the priests of Roth. Since the Westwars, the two churches have been cooperating much more, their differences small compared with the threat from the pantheistic invaders. Far more of Mor's followers remain in the cities than those of Roth, and their priests are tolerated by most of the Ariuk governors, though the very mention of the name Mor has been banned in Crin, once the site of the High Temple of the Church.

Morothora

The legendary city of the Voön. After the Gods' War, the Voön went to live under the Circle Sea, and are believed to have created a wondrous city there. Since there has been no contact with the Voön since long before the Wizardwar, it is unknown whether Morothora survived the Conflagration.

New Brezen

Greatest of the cities of Brezenreach. Located upon an immense bluff above Frackenloch at the confluence of the rivers Fraken and Colling, it is not only defensible against enormous forces, it is truly beautiful. Built up from a well-established fishing and trading village called Jewelsedge, New Brezen was settled by the great bulk of the refugees from the Conflagration. Until Ariuk's conquest, New Brezen dominated Brezenreach politically and socially, now its nobles sit in their hunting lodges and grumble, while the Clans of Ariuk occupy their villas.

Ngatnil

see Goblins

Norr

Queen of New Brezen, wife of Shaun Rey Grantson. Young Princess Norr was kidnapped by her kinsman, Duke Oncen, after the murder of her father, King Norrin. After several years, she escaped her captivity at Norwatch, and with the help of Shaun Rey Grantson, returned to New Brezen, and eventually claimed her throne. Her reign was short, betrayal soon left her husband imprisoned in Rothlorn, and herself on the run from her enemies. She died in exile at Woodgate, after giving birth to her twin sons Thernd and Thessad.

Ntedjus

The Grandmaster of the Mercenaries Guild at the time of the High King. Ntedjus was a mighty warrior of incredible size with skin as black as night. His unique appearance led to persistent rumors that he was a demonling, but since Ariuk's conquest it has been discovered that there are entire clans of people who look as he did. Ntedjus served many years as a bodyguard in New Brezen, rising to the preeminent position in his Guild, and served as the general of Shaun Rey Grantson's army, leading it on to the Westwars after the High King was struck down. His favored weapons were the quarterstaff and the sword. He also began the practice, now common among mercenaries, of wearing coins from each job as part of his armor. Ntedjus offered himself as a hostage to Ailif to help assure the peace, and has not been heard of since.

Oaoie

The city of Wizards in the center of the Circle Sea. When the cities of Brezen and Bingham began to grow beyond their original purpose of supporting the Wizards' studies, the city of Oaoie was founded, and banned to all but Wizards, and a select few servants and traders. In this isolated position, the art of Wizardry quickly reached great heights, making possible the great works of Doran. Oaoie was virtually obliterated by the Conflagration.

Omarr Clara

The Circle Sea. Once the scene of thriving traffic between the cities of Brezen, Bing, and Oaoie, as well as their upriver settlements, the Circle Sea has been impassable to all ships since the Wizardwar, and is often referred to now as the Cursed Sea.

Ora

The goddess of the Air. Ora was the most prominent of the Yssa's gods, being the goddess of free movement, but as her people became citified with the coming of the Wizards, her influence declined, and she is said to have died within a century of Aoae's landing.

Her memory is still held in high regard by the remaining "true" Yssa, especially the women.

Prolan

The god of Life. One of Denungrot's children, Prolan was killed during the rebellion against his father. Little is known of Prolan except that the Duhoenn still mourn his death.

Railsend

The open city between Bochen and New Brezen. Railsend was built at the site of the battle in which Ariuk's legions were halted by Bochen's war machines. Originally a temporary camp along the railroad which was being built between Bochen and New Brezen, it has grown in twenty years into the most modern city in all of Echieth. Many new building techniques developed during the rapid industrialization of Bochen have been employed in its construction, foremost among those being the use of pre-cast concrete. These sections, shipped in by rail from Bochen, have been used to raise the strongest defences this side of Doran's Wall, complete with a score of integral steam ballistae.

Many cultures mix at Railsend, and it has almost instantly become the center of commerce, diplomacy and intrigue for all Brezenreach. The guilds, have made Railsend their own, the Civil Governor is appointed by the Council of all Guilds.

Roth

The god of the Earth. Roth was the leader of the revolt among Denungrot's children, and has been most dominant amongst them ever since. His worshippers achieved great political power and financial wealth during the Age of Wizards, and maintained it well after the Wizardwar. Roth's church has fallen on hard times recently, first with the fall of Triad, site of their High Temple, and then with the fall of the inner cities, and the flight of the nobility to the hills above Rothlorn. Once, Roth's priests were top advisors to all Brezenreach's leaders, now they are largely refugees, bitter and powerless.

Rothlorn

A city in the north of Brezenreach on the banks of Rothloch. Once a thriving city with great wealth from fishing, mining, and lumbering, Rothlorn's entire population disappeared in the year 710. The city was not re-settled until the wave of refugees from the inner cities headed there, though many of the more superstitious feared the "curse" of Rothlorn, and settled in outlying manors and hunting lodges instead.

Se A Ya Yayng

(The Place of the Dance) Ancient Yssa name for the lands now known as Brezenreach

Shaun Rey Grantson

The enchanted High King of Brezenreach. Shaun Rey roamed across Brezenreach for nearly twenty years, collecting friends and enemies, marrying often, and eventually discovering his heritage as the son of Grant, and the grandson of Mas. He found his way into the center of a series of power struggles, particularly involving New Brezen, but having repercussions affecting most of Brezenreach. By the time the need for a High King to lead the fight against Ailif and Würl arose, Shaun Rey had established himself as the most effective leader in the lands, despite the rumored curse which led to the eventual violent death of all those close to him. Almost immediately upon his ascension to kingship, Shaun Rey was stricken by a powerful spell of unknown origin, which cast him into a deep sleep from which he has yet to awaken.

Sqas

The eldest and most ruthless of Eorcen's sons. Sqas became obsessed with the power available from the great battery built at Oaoie, and when his campaign to become Grandmaster after his father's death failed, he went into self-imposed exile. In the following years, he made several attempts to seize the power, but was always defeated by his brother, Doran. He was far too powerful for Koen, however, and his relentless onslaught caused Koen to destroy him with the very power he sought, destroying most of civilization as well. Rumors persist that Sqas' essence somehow survived, and continues to haunt the ravaged lands.

Szlakarken

Doran's Bane, the Great Demon of Fire. Szlakarken was Denungrot's first and favorite child, and since his father's betrayal by his siblings, has become the single most hated being in all Brezenreach. He seem to hold particular hatred for those who achieve power, either temporal or magical, both Doran and Shaun Rey Grantson were favorite victims of his schemes, and both became obsessed with his destruction.

Thaaorin

The living mountains who serve Roth. According to the lore of the Yssa and Duhoenn, many mountains are actually beings of living rock who fought for Roth during the Gods' War. Thoden, Thaung, and Therot, the mountains of Triad, are said to guard the tomb of Denungrot.

The smallest of the Thaaorin, called Knolls, are the only ones known to have stirred since the Wizardship landed.

Thernd

Prince of New Brezen and effective ruler of Bochen. Prince Thernd went to Bochen as a very young man, after his disputes with his brother made it impossible for either of them to become ruler of New Brezen. In Bochen, Thernd attracted the brightest minds from all Brezenreach, and began building a new society in which new ideas were encouraged, and new fortunes were made from the application of these ideas. Thernd's movement was almost wholly responsible for the rapid development of Bochen's economy and industry, as well as the city's ability to hold off the forces of Ariuk. Prince Thernd holds no political position in Bochen, but nearly all those who do look to him for guidance.

Thessad

Prince of New Brezen, and ruler of Grantwood. Very little is known about the brother of Thernd, save that he has claimed Grantwood as his holding, and disavowed the political struggles of the Inner Lands. Apparently Ariuk has chosen to honor Thessad's claims, because he has ordered his people to keep out of Grantwood, and to avoid trouble with Thessad.

Tnii

A legendary race of Goblins who live to the far south of the Great Beyond, in huge buildings of glass. Some of the Ariuk clans claim to have traded with them in the past.

Toliem

The Sword of Swiftness. One of the Kyagen forged by Doran, said to confer the speed of thought upon the body of its wielder. Originally given to the Yssa, Toliem is rumored to now be possessed by Veltyana.

Tomen

The Sword of Sharpness. One of the Kyagen forged by Doran, said to be able to cut through anything with a single strike. Tomen was made for Grant, who passed it on to his son Shaun Rey. The sword now lies at Kingsrest.

Veltyana

The woman who caused Doran's wall to be built. Veltyana appeared in Brezenreach in the year 195 at the head of a large force from the Great Beyond. She defeated the garrisons of Eastwatch and Plainwatch, and headed toward Brezen. Doran then led a series of attacks upon her, finally defeating her at Frakensford. Veltyana chose death over captivity, and was buried in a grand tomb that Doran built for her. Somehow she returned to life around 700 AW, and has made a few appearances since then, generally in the form of altercations with Shaun Rey or Mas. Many believe that she is the true power behind Ariuk.

Voön

An amphibious race who lived beneath the Circle Sea. The Voön have never interacted with the civilization of the surface world, except to complain about all the sailing and fishing in their waters. The Lost Isles were declared off-limits to man in order to appease them, and they were seen only fleetingly ever since. It is believed that they were nearly destroyed by the Conflagration, but due to their traditional avoidance of mankind, and the closing of the Circle Sea, it is impossible to know whether they survived at all.

Watches

A series of tower fortresses which were built during the Age of Wizards to defend against raids from neighboring lands. A series of five Watches was built along the seas to the west, Lastwatch and Thornwatch on opposite sides of the Bay of Thorns, Seawatch, on the westernmost point of land between the Bay of Thorns and the Circle Sea, Serpent's Watch, at the northern entrance to the Circle Sea, and Lostwatch, at the southern entrance to the Circle Sea. A second series of Watches was built to the east, Norwatch, which stands high in the mountains above Woodbury and Morloch, and four others which were later incorporated into Doran's Wall as Eastgate, Plainsgate, Woodgate, and Southgate. Most of the Watches were abandoned after the Wizardwar, though several have been reoccupied since by local forces.

Westwars

The campaign led by Ntedjus and the remnants of the High King's army against the invading forces of Ailif and Würl. Although unable to drive the invaders from the conquered lands, the High King's army was able to halt any further incursions, and give the Council of Seven time to establish a truce.

Wizardship (Aoae)

A mysterious craft which bore the Wizards from their homeland to Echieth. It is generally believed that Aoae was some sort of flying vessel, but whether it was magical or mechanical in nature is unknown. The Wizardship made several journeys between the Echieth and its place of origin, but was apparently destroyed in a storm about fifty years after its first landing.

Wizardwar

see Koen, Sqas, Conflagration

Woodbury

A city in the east of Brezenreach, which was the heart of the slave trade. For centuries, slaving raids into the Great Beyond were staged from Woodbury, and the Slavers Guild had most of their training centers there as well. In 707, a pair of Serpents scourged the city, devouring nearly all if its inhabitants. The goblins of Chyspyd now have taken up residence there.

Wrode

see Essuth

Würl

A warrior society who, in the year 709, sailed from the north, and conquered the lands along the river Cohloin. Later, they also took the city of Triad, after a lengthy siege. Their young warriors often venture into the Inner Lands to raid and test themselves against the warriors of Brezenreach and Ariuk. They are probably descended from the raiders who caused the Wizards to build the Watches.

Yssa

The first humans to settle in Brezenreach. They had been wandering across the continent for generations since being shipwrecked in the northeast, calling themselves the *Yssa Ya Yeor* (People of the Wagon). They were so impressed with these lands that the held a great dance to celebrate, and became the *Yssa Ya Yayng* (People of the Dance). They had a long and peaceful relationship with the Duhoenn, and helped drive the Goblins from the Inner Lands. When the Wizards presented them with the Deck, they became the *Yssa Ya Yeot* (People of the Deck), though few of them maintained their traditional lifestyle for long after the coming of the Wizards, being instead drawn to the growing cities. What few Yssa remain still travel between the cities, but because the herds have dwindled since the raising of Doran's Wall, they have been forced to support themselves whatever way they can, generally as entertainers, though sometimes as thieves as well... the guilds leave them little opportunity for honest trade.

Yulorf the Great

A leader of the Yssa during the last Duhoenn-Goblin War. Yulorf was a cunning warrior who engineered an ambush in which the Goblin warlord, Brog was captured, and most of his army was slaughtered. He was especially favored by the Duhoenn, who rewarded him with a magical spear and shield. These weapons are immortalized by their inclusion in the Deck.

You Aked For It...

SERSIS (Monkey 'Mech)

Mass: 45 Tons
Power Plant: 315 XL
Armament:

- 1 ER Large Laser
- 3 Medium Lasers
- 1 Tail

Type: **SRS-1S SERSIS**		*Tons*
Tonnage:	45 Tons	
Internal Structure:		4.5
Engine:	315XL	11
Walking MPs:	7	
Running MPs:	11	
Jumping MPs:	7	
Heat Sinks:	10 (20)	0
Gyro:		3
Cockpit:		3
Armor Factor:	144	9

	Int Struct	*Armor Value*
Head:	3	9
Center Torso:	14	22/5
Rt./Lt. Torso:	11	17/5
Rt./Lt. Arm:	7	14
Rt./Lt. Leg:	11	18

Weapons and Ammo:

Type	Loc.	Crit.	
ER Large Laser	RA	2	5
Medium Laser	RT	1	1
Medium Laser	LT	1	1
Medium Laser	CT	1	1
Tail	CT	1	3
Jump Jet	CT	1	.5
Jump Jets	RT	3	1.5
Jump Jets	LT	3	1.5

Named for a legendary literary warrior, the *Sersis* was constructed as the graduate project of Keller Teal while he was at the Banzai Institute. Built upon a modified *Phoenix Hawk* chassis, the "Monkey 'Mech", as it became known around the Institute, featured a semi-revolutionary new twist in 'mech design: the Tail. Teal believed that the tail would serve two important functions: to provide extra balance, and to provide a means of engaging in physical combat to the 'mech's rear. Extensive testing on New Avalon's proving grounds established that the theory was sound, but no 'mechwarrior could be found who would not be embarrassed to drive it in public. Currently, the *Sersis* prototype is on display at the Banzai Institute's Graduate Studies Hall.

GAME EFFECTS: A tail weighs 1 ton for every 15 tons of 'mech, and occupies 1 critical space. A tail provides a -1 modifier on all piloting rolls, and in combat can be used to make a half-strength (1 pt. dmg. per 10 tons of 'mech) kick into the three rear hexes, with a base to hit roll of 5.

In Our Next Exciting Issue...

God Only Knows